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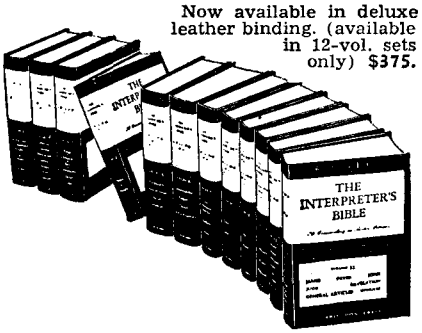

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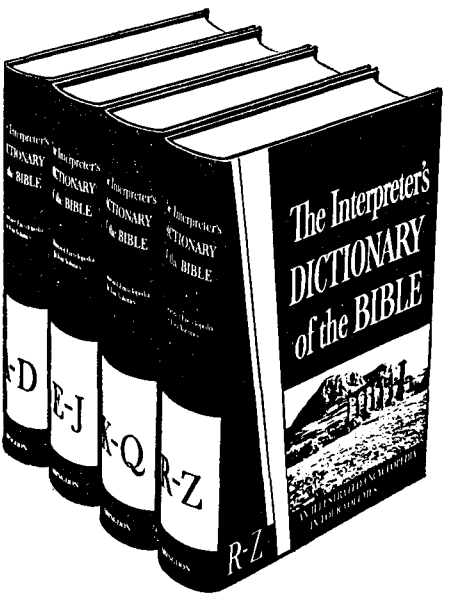

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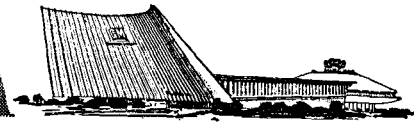

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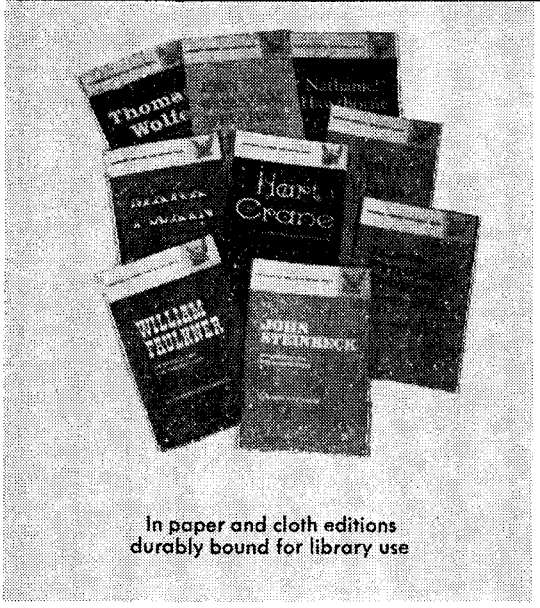

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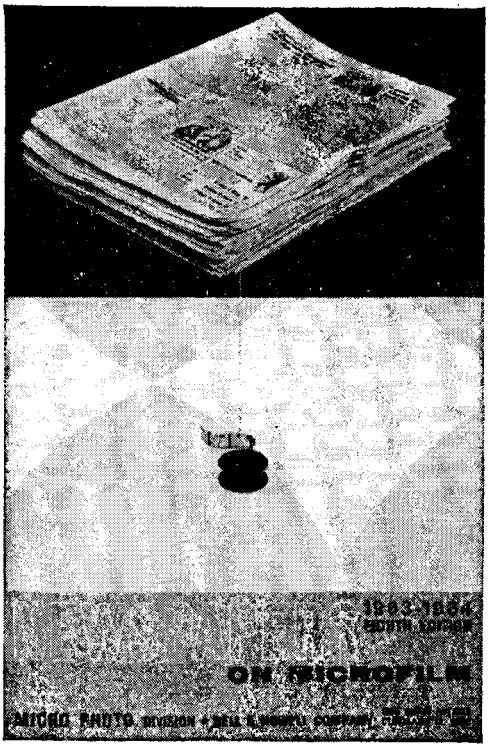

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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"Do not all charms fly at the touch of cold philosophy?" Keats answered his own rhetorical question by saying that they did. Science took the rainbow out of the sky and clipped the angels' wings.

For this he has been scolded ever since. Truth is stranger than fiction, and the wonders of science, so he has been sternly reminded, are more wonderful than any others. The rainbow is still there—not, to be sure, as evidence of God's promise to Noah, but as an even more interesting demonstration of the laws of dispersion. The universe is wider than our notions of it ever were, and a treatise on biology is more amazing than a medieval bestiary.

Perhaps. Yet the two most celebrated animals that ever lived, never lived—the phoenix and the unicorn. There must be some reason other than perversity for the fact. To this day the simple—and that includes many poets—prefer them (along with such slightly less famous creatures as the kind pelican and the toad that bears a precious jewel in its head) to the lungfish or the platypus. The average man, although no poet, is more likely to believe that an elephant never forgets or that the hoop snake rolls merrily along with his tail in his mouth than he is to know or care whether or not the possum is a marsupial. When the Emperor Franz Josef happened to see an eagle which one of his huntsmen had shot, he is said to have inquired wonderingly what had become of the other head. The Amazon may not be the only river named after a woman, but it is the only one that comes to my mind and it was so called because these warlike ladies were moved to South America when the original African homeland had become sufficiently well-known to make it pretty evident that they were not to be found there. The imagination just couldn't bear to give them up, and if the Himalayas are ever thoroughly explored the Abominable Snowman is sure to turn up somewhere else.

Although I have read a good deal about real animals and how they behave, I am as much fascinated by what is called unnatural history as I am by the natural. Nothing could be more amazing than Von Frisch on the most recently discovered wonders of the bee, but for sheer delight I would rather take to bed with me that credulous Roman, Pliny the Elder; the better (but not too well) informed Edward Topsell in whom the actual and the picturesque era are charmingly blended; or, best of all, the medieval bestiary so admiringly and sympathetically translated by T. H. White.

Truth may be stranger than fiction, but it is strange in a different way and that, I think, is the key to the mystery. As a naturalist I am always shocked at the thought of extinction. But who misses the passenger pigeon or the dodo as he would miss the phoenix and the unicorn? God made the first two; man made the second two. And for that reason he has an especial affection for them. Since fiction is what we make up, it is inevitably what we would like to be true. Too much of what we find out, even when it isn't disconcerting, strikes no responsive chord in our nature. Unlike fancy, it is not part of the world we would have made had we had the making of it.

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When a medieval monk explains to me that the peacock shrieks so hideously because he is vain and has such ugly feet that he cries in rage every time he happens to see them, I feel that this is precisely what ought to be true and it is a pseudo fact I shall remember long after I have forgotten the latest experiment to demonstrate that possums "play dead," not because they hope to deceive me, but because fear has so overstimulated their adrenal glands as to paralyze the muscles. Unless I forgot that fact or alleged fact, how can I ever again accuse anyone of playing possum? Like too many other scientific facts it just isn't humanly usable. A possum playing dead would certainly be more interesting if he knew what he was doing. So would a bird practicing the broken wing trick—so much more interesting, indeed, that I am going to believe that he does know until the mechanists get better negative evidence than they have now. After all, none of them has ever been a possum or a bird.

Unnatural history, although distinguishable from myth, is also in part the product of similar tendencies and needs of the human mind. Ignorance, misconception and credulity contribute to it. But it is not merely any or all of these things. It is also a creation of the imagination and therefore, like the myth, a wish fulfillment that reveals something about human nature, however misleading its picture of external nature may be. Men believed in unicorns and believed that they had seen them, not so much because they were inaccurate observers, as because such a beast would be a highly desirable addition to our fauna. Since he did not exist, it behooved man to invent him, and invent him he did. Indeed, he did much more than that. He invented a theory to justify the invention, not only of the unicorn, but also of any other possible beast that nature had, as we now know, unfortunately forgotten to create.

This nature, so we all learned in school, was formerly believed to "abhor a vacuum." But perhaps there are some, even among readers of the SCHOLAR, who do not know (and I apologize in advance to those who do) that the premise "nature abhors a vacuum" once covered much more than the physical. It meant that the universe is a plenum. The perfection of God implies that everything possible is also actual. And since a unicorn *could* exist, it certainly *must* exist somewhere, if not in any conveniently observable place. To say that it didn't was a blasphemous denial of the perfection of God and the consequent perfection of the universe he created.

Here, for example, is what was said on that subject in a thesis published in 1661 by a certain Georg Kaspar Kirchmayer who apparently stole it from a contemporary although he himself was a professor at Hamlet's alma mater in Wittenberg and a member of both the English and the Viennese Royal Academies:

> Who cares any longer to be of such simplicity as not to hesitate to oppose his own view to many proofs both divine and human, for the existence of the unicorn. . . . If, says the acute Scaliger, anything were missing, a vacuum would be created in the forms of animal life. This would be a far greater fault in nature than a vacuum in space without substance.

This same Professor Kirchmayer was, however, equally convinced that the phoenix was a mere fable and convinced for a similarly sound reason. All accounts of this bird agree that there is never more than one phoenix alive at a time. God would certainly not permit any creature to get away with so plain a defiance of his universally applicable injunction: increase and multiply.

But where did all the delightful nonsense that the medieval mind was so exuberantly to elaborate come from? It must be very old since there are in the Old Testament various oblique references to some of the most familiar tales (like the refusal of the raven to feed its young until they show black and the male lion that breathes life into its stillborn cubs) which seem to imply general familiarity with them. But there is not much of it in surviving Greek literature of the Golden Age because although that age was obsessed by myth it was already developing too strong a sense of fact to write

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first-rate unnatural history. Even Herodotus was cagey about the phoenix. "They have also another sacred bird . . . called the phoenix, which I myself have never seen except in pictures." (That would have been enough to convince any bestiary writer.) Aristotle, the master of those who know, knew quite a bit that isn't so, but he was a scientist who would never have permitted himself to believe anything just because it would be agreeable to do so.

It was the Romans, and especially Pliny, who passed on to the medieval masters most of the hints they elaborated. Because no age since theirs has accepted a cosmology so completely homocentric they took it for granted that anything that would illustrate God's detailed provisions for the convenience or the instruction of man must necessarily be true. And since the universe was a metaphor the metaphorical interpretation of any fact or imagined fact must be the most significant one.

The future Cardinal Newman had for a time great difficulty in accepting the claim of the Roman Church to infallible authority in matters of faith and morals. But the difficulty vanished when it occurred to him that such an authority would be very helpful to man, that God always provided what man needed, and that therefore he must have provided this convenience. This is precisely the line of reasoning that the monkish compiler of unnatural history followed, even when dealing with the most specific details. Your modern who wants to find in nature instructive morals is often inconvenienced by the necessity of getting his facts reasonably straight but the monk had no hesitation in finding the moral first and he took it for granted that nature would necessarily illustrate it somewhere. He did not find it difficult to believe that the widowed turtledove never consented to a second marriage because that would set a good example to the human female, and if he had heard that the newborn lion cub lay dead for three days until his father breathed upon him, that was so pat an allegory of the resurrection that one need inquire no further.

That the medieval writer should have been ignorant does not surprise us much. Considering the circumstances under which he lived, it is, as a matter of fact, astonishing how much genuine information is mixed up with the extravagant nonsense in the better bestiaries. The compiler was a long way from either Africa or India and from an elephant. It is extremely unlikely that he had ever seen one or ever known anybody who had. Yet he tells us, for example, that their period of gestation is two years—which is almost precisely accurate. But then he goes on to repeat the oft-repeated tale that elephants cannot lie down because they have no joints in their legs and are compelled to lean against trees when they wish to sleep.

What does surprise us is the medieval zoologist's calm confidence that this is the best of all possible worlds; that God's ways are not mysterious but plainly evident to anyone who will observe them; and that there is nothing in nature that does not either supply a need or present a useful moral. Being a monk, as he usually was, he had renounced the wicked world of men but he had no doubt that there was nothing wrong with the universe except man's wickedness. One could not possibly get further than this from existentialism or radical alienation. Since the physical world was an allegory of the moral and the spiritual, it seemed therefore perfectly obvious that the soundest scientific method was simply to ask of every observed phenomenon, "What purpose does it serve?" or "What lesson does it teach?" If the only answer he could come up with was one that must have seemed rather farfetched even to him, he accepted it for the same reason that the modern physicist accepts the paradoxes of his science: "What other explanation is possible?"

To us it seems that no "scientific method" could be more completely unscientific than the usual medieval one. "Teleological" has become the dirtiest word in the vocabulary of the modern interpreter of natural phenomenon, but the medieval scientist was not merely silly. Given his premise that the universe embodies a purpose and that this purpose is human welfare, his methods fol-

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lowed as naturally as the method of our science follows from the premise that man is merely an accident in a universe that knows nothing of his peculiar desires, needs, and standards of value that he has somehow or other most improbably acquired.

One assumption leads naturally to another. We think "the doctrine of signatures" extraordinarily silly, but if you take it for granted that God created the various members of the plant kingdom to serve human purposes, then what is more likely than that he would give a key to the various uses so that, for instance, the liver-shaped leaves of the liverwort inform us that it is good for diseases of the liver and the habit of certain saxifrages growing in the disintegrating fissures of rock indicates that it will similarly disintegrate kidney and gallbladder stones.

The only cause for astonishment is the length of time that such beliefs lingered into the age of science. A mid-seventeenth-century herbalist writes of the herb commonly known as horse tongue: "The little leaf-like tongue, growing upon the greater, is no light argument that this plant is effectual for sores in the mouth and throat." Although John Ray, the first great English biologist and a true scientist in our understanding of the term, rejected the doctrine of signatures as unsupported by convincing evidence, he was still sufficiently inclined to teleology to write:

> One observation I shall add relating to the virtues of plants, in which I think there is something of truth, that is, that there are, by the wise disposition of Providence, such species of plants produced in every country as are most proper and convenient for the meat and medicine of the men and animals that breathe and inhabit there. Insomuch that Solenander writes, that from the frequency of the plants that spring up naturally in any region he could easily gather what endemical diseases the inhabitants thereof were subject to: so in Denmark, Friesland, and Holland, where the scurvy usually reigns, the proper remedy thereof, scurvygrass, doth plentifully grow.

The more we have learned, or think we have learned, about the universe the less tenable such assumptions have come to seem. In fact, the intellectual history of Western man is often summed up as consisting of the various stages of his disillusion with the assumption that the world was made for him, that he is the most important thing in it, that it has a humanly understandable meaning, and purpose; that "all evil is good not understood."

If any reader has begun to suspect that I suffer from so much nostalgia for this paradise lost that I plan to defy the guardians of the gate and reenter it, I hasten to assure them that I neither believe that possible nor wish that it were. I have more faith in the doctor with his syringe full of antibiotics than in any herbalist however skilled in reading plant signatures. Preparing recently for a trip around the world that would include some unusually unhealthy regions, I had myself inoculated against nine different maladies instead of planning to cull along the road those symbols that, if I believed Ray and his authority the learned Solenander, would surely be growing where any of the nine diseases were especially prevalent. But I do have one more comment to make.

In quite properly rejecting the assumption that a theory must be true if it is comforting or consoling, we have acquired, it seems to me, a tendency to lean over backwards in the opposite direction. The more any sociological, or physiological, or psychological theory offends our dignity or seems to deprive us of the power either to control our destiny or even to understand our own aims and motives, the more likely it seems to us to embody the truth. If Darwin tells us that we are the product of blind chance, Marxism-Leninism that our ideals and ideas are mere ineffectual "ideologies," Freud that we don't know what is going on in our own minds, and sociology that we are what our own society makes us rather than what we choose to be, the very fact that all these theories are rather dispiriting makes us inclined to accept them. Sometimes I find myself suspecting that if we did understand the universe and our place in it, this universe might then not seem so completely alien as we have come to assume. After all, we too are a product of it.

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the scholar cornered

A Procession of Children

[From a Critic's Notebook]

Yes, we're boys,—always playing with tongue or with pen—
And I sometimes have asked,—Shall we ever be men?
Shall we always be youthful, and laughing, and gay,
Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.: "The Boys"
(written for the *thirtieth* reunion of his Harvard class)

❧

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.
. . . . .
And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "The Children's Hour"

❧

"The clock struck six; and, having swept up the hearth, Beth put a pair of slippers down to warm. Somehow the sight of the old shoes had a good effect upon the girls; for mother was coming, and every one brightened to welcome her. Meg stopped lecturing, and lighted the lamp; Amy got out of the easy chair without being asked, and Jo forgot how tired she was as she sat up to hold the slippers nearest to the blaze."

Louisa May Alcott: *Little Women*

❧

"Don't ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody."

Holden Caulfield in *The Catcher In The Rye*

❧

Henry James in the last, unfinished volume of his autobiography remembers his first intimation that youth is gone as a raid on "the enemy

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country, the country of the general lost freshness."

I remember, I remember—how nice and poignant even Mary McCarthy becomes in *Memoirs of a Catholic Girlhood*, her best book and ironically the only one of her books in which she loses herself in her material, forgets to pass barbed notes to old acquaintance. That picture of the young Mary is a perfect example of the charity we keep for our younger selves. If an American writer could portray *all* the characters in a novel with the same concentrated interest, he would achieve *The Brothers Karamazov*.

I remember, I remember—Henry Adams in the first chapter of his *Education* remembers himself at three knowing "only the color of yellow. He first found himself sitting on a yellow kitchen floor in strong sunlight." Then he caught scarlet fever, and just barely recovering, remembered forever after not the illness "but his aunt entering the sick-room bearing in her hand a saucer with a baked apple." Out of ice-locked New England and his own lifelong bitterness, Henry Adams retrieves color. The senses so long starved fastened on yellow as the dying writer Bergotte in Proust fastened on the bit of yellow wall in a picture by Vermeer. Henry Adams remembering color ceases to be the vindictive old gravedigger of civilizations, the American Spengler, and becomes—the American Renoir.

Perhaps nowhere as in New England, in the comfortable snug 1870's where so many children's books were invented—that is when Mark Twain, living in Hartford, got into the game—did total comfortableness with one's racial, social, religious and financial well-being get itself complacently expressed in so many images of the *manly, sturdy, bright* and *cheery* white Protestant boy. ". . . an amiable, impulsive lad, blessed with fine digestive powers, and no hypocrite . . . in short, I was a real human boy, such as you may meet anywhere in New England, and no more like the impossible boy in a storybook than a sound orange is like one that has been sucked dry."—Thomas Bailey Aldrich, *The Story Of A Bad Boy*. No wonder that so many American men, after a third Martini, remember that they knew Tom Sawyer *personally*.

Old-fashioned America, old easy rural villagey America, the America of Tom and Huck, of Penrod and Sam, of Uncle Remus and *Peck's Bad Boy* and Howard Pyle, of *The Green Mountain Boys* and *The Hoosier Schoolboy*, of the Rover Boys, Tom Swift, Frank and Dick Merriwell, of *The Youth's Companion*, of *St. Nicholas*, of *American Boy*, even of Hemingway's Nick Adams!—what a dream of an uncomplicated society, of a society *run by boys*.

Youth And The Bright Medusa. My Lost Youth. When Willa Cather hid out on Bank Street in New York, hating the modern city, hating the way its people spoke English—like bank tellers, she said, flipping out brand new bills—she had nowhere to look but back, and remembered all those young girls whose spirit alone had warmed the ice-caked plains of Nebraska. "It's memory," she once said of the act of writing—"the memory that goes with the vocation." *Not Under Forty*. If you're under forty when I'm not, go away! You can't understand, you never will understand! *My* youth was pioneers!

So Henry Adams in the *Education*—a book that identifies his youth with the lost greatness of American history, and then shudders over all the rest. In Dante's hell the worst suffering was to remember earthly happiness. For so many American writers the *only* happiness is to remember the past they have lost. Yet it can't be youth itself they remember so fondly, for most writers are painfully aware, as children, of the incongruity and loneliness of imagination. It is the youth of the *country* everyone now likes to remember. Einstein once said that children everywhere play Indians. But in our country *Indians* once played Indians—and even Indians don't do this anymore!

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The American frontier was in some way everybody's youth. It was even, God help us, Hitler's—who drugged himself in youth with Karl May's fabrications of Wild West stories. Even the most sophisticated writers of the twenties, like Fitzgerald and Hemingway, kept from the sands of time images of *their* Middle West as the springtime of the American race. Fitzgerald in *The Great Gatsby* remembers going home at Christmas through the country where west of Chicago "the real snow, our snow, began," and Hemingway's most beautiful work, those early stories of a tortured boy's hunting and fishing, of clear light and ominous shadows on mountain streams, now seem to take place in that timeless world, the American sports Valhalla, where Nick and his friend can argue forever about the Giants and the Cards and John J. McGraw.

Probably no writer ever remembers his youth as happy. When he grows up enough to use it, he becomes positively fond of his childhood; that animal no longer bites. But good writers, no matter how old, celebrated and well-practiced they become in the art of dissembling their early terrors, leave themselves open to the truth. At Amherst, winter nights, Robert Frost would finally leave the stage, his ears ringing with applause, his face wreathed in the smiles and contentment of the old poet who has completely made it, the poet admired by all, even congressmen. But as I walked him home one night through the freezing cold, he remembered anxieties he had suffered at Harvard sixty years before. All those early fears and tremors have been brilliantly used in Frost's best poems time and again. They could be a terror in the night to the old man who at eighty-two could not bear to go to bed in the dark. But even as he recited those early pains, he was marshalling them.

❧

Bernard Shaw says somewhere that the evolution of man on this continent is most remarkable for the amount of social change it compressed into three centuries. He describes America as a miniature of human evolution. Is it the fact that the "youth" period of our history is so near us (still surrounded by "founding fathers") that explains the identification of young people in American books with the youth of a society, rather than with the biological youth of the individual? Boys and girls (at least after the dire Calvinist suspicions were done away with that children were as damnable as everybody else) emerge even in the moral books of New England, in the sensible and affectionate views that suddenly began to prevail in Hawthorne and Emerson, as sweet and cute, lovable and cherishable—as nice and good, in short, as grownup Americans. Children reflect our own possibilities. In old Puritan New England, children were regarded as limited, sinful, as grim as everybody else; although parents no doubt slipped into tenderness, the official view of children was severe. But as soon as the Congregationalist ministers could no longer tap at doors with their gold-headed canes to enforce authority in a theocracy, as soon as the beneficent rays of Transcendentalism (not to say the growing comfort and secular happiness of middle-class families in virtuous and self-respecting New England, to itself the best of all possible worlds) made the lovable American child as fundamental a type as the self-respecting Yankee, the child in American literature becomes the dear little fellow, the lovable urchin, the professional bad boy—Our Gang . . . of milksops turned inside out. Soon, after the "gentle boy" of Hawthorne, and Jacob Abbott's Rollo and Ned Higgins in *The House Of The Seven Gables,* will come Thomas Bailey Aldrich's Tom Bailey, and Tom Sawyer, not to forget Stephen Crane's Jimmie Trescott, Tarkington's Little Orvie, Penrod Schofield, Samuel Williams and Willie Baxter. One begins to miss the clairvoyant Pearl in *The Scarlet Letter*—that child of sin had a cool and deadly Puritan eye for human self-deception. What simpleminded "rascals" American boys become in our Victorian and Edwardian books, with galluses always falling along torn pants as they skip off for a day's freedom from mother. What darlings the little girls become in their

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yellow curls and pantaloon ruffles as they watch *their man* steal second. They are all on television to this day, playing happily at Lassie's feet, and singing in unison that Blatt's Mush is good for you—they are all as eager to please as their parents are.

Surely it is not because we think of children as a race apart, a mystery to be interpreted only by psychologists, that children are so important in American society and so central to American writing; children are simply our images of ourselves, of our conscious expectations. They are our hope, even when they betray its shallowness. If you want to know how fortunate we are, how prosperous and easy and self-indulgent, how happy, how wasteful, how prodigal, how *young*—look at our children. Any American who has been brought up by European parents knows the difference between Europe and America in a way that Henry James did.

In American novels that deal with poverty, exclusion, oppression, children do not stand out, they are hardly noticed. The too-too lovable little imps in American literature are usually middle-class children —they are, in fact, George F. Babbitt and his friends some years ago. If the United States sometimes impresses visitors as a society geared to children, a society that *children* can love better than other citizens, this is because a child's normal expectation of life, his high spirits and his general air of having such a surplus of vitality that like surplus cash it must be spent on unneeded objects, corresponds to the extraordinary good fortune that so many Americans have had in life. There is no mystery about the preeminence of children in American life and literature—Americans, take it all in all, feel as protected, as confident, as snug, as only children ever do.

And what do people do when the necessities of life are well in hand? They have fun. They live among beings as fortunate as themselves, and they have fun all day long. Even the little crises of existence, not to mention the rituals of family dinners and learning all about God in Sunday school, can become fun. Nowhere else, I am sure, are there so many books for adults about children having fun. Alice is not "playing" in wonderland; she is in a dream, which turns into a pageant, into a nightmare, into logician's games. In the classic fairy tales that only Europeans seem able to write, children contend with adults, often against the grinning face of evil. Although the imaginative values on which these stories are based finally bring children home, as in a dream, one can never doubt that the children in these stories are up to their ears in life, that they are undergoing tribulations which later they will understand too well. But Tom Sawyer has *fun*. He organizes *fun*. He lives in a *fun* group. Even the greatest book we have about a boy, *Huckleberry Finn*, is spoiled by Tom Sawyer having fun—it is by his wish that poor Jim has to be chained to a bedside and tormented with fun and games. Although Huckleberry Finn has just carried Jim and himself a long way, he can be forced by Tom Sawyer to do things, out of silly boys' books, to poor Jim. But fun and games, organized fun, is what Americans, in the imagination of Mark Twain happily smoking away after a big dinner in the Hartford of the 1870's, have come to think of as a right. You see this in the indulgent, arch, patronizing tone that Mark Twain adopts in *Tom Sawyer*, a style that is aimed heavily at the comfortable reader, and that says in effect—Ah, the dear little shavers that once we were! A pattern had been established that was to make all books about boy adventurers, up to Stephen Crane's *Whilomville Stories* of 1900 and Booth Tarkington's *Penrod* of 1914, read as if they had been composed by a man audibly "chuckling" as he writes.

Of course Tom Sawyer is a poor boy, and an orphan at that; and it is true that the family in later books about boys—written to celebrate the American *belle époque* (which is vaguely the time of Theodore Roosevelt, any true American boy's favorite boy)—is usually upper middle-class, professional and suburban. But Mark Twain, who was now himself upper middle-class, contentedly reports his own barefoot youth as a time of absolute innocence. "Part of my plan," he says in his preface to *Tom*

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Sawyer, "has been to try to pleasantly remind adults of what they once were themselves, and of how they felt and thought and talked, and what queer enterprises they sometimes engaged in." And this is typical of the archness in which he writes —"he uncovered an ambuscade, in the person of his aunt; and when she saw the state his clothes were in, her resolution to turn his Saturday holiday into captivity at hard labor became adamantine in its firmness." So Tarkington, in *Penrod*, amusedly explains that "One of the hardest conditions of boyhood is the almost continuous strain put upon the powers of invention by the constant and harassing necessity for explanations of every natural act." This is the way Tom Sawyer and Penrod Schofield (who are already apprentice writers) will write about childhood, when childhood is gone. This is the fondness of reminiscence.

Only once, actually, did Mark Twain break through this all-too-twinkly, chuckly softness. Then he wrote, in the boy's own voice, the story of the most famous boy in American literature—whose experience is *not* middle-class, not comfortable, not an exclusive concern with fun and games. Huckleberry Finn's experience, in fact, is a desperate struggle to outwit trouble. His mother is never mentioned, his father tries to cheat him and then imprisons him, and in order to get away from this drunken "mudcat," Huck must set it up so that everyone will think he has been murdered. This is a boy who, although surrounded by Aunt Sallies who want to "sivilize" him, runs off to be himself. Although he chooses low company, he must protect himself against it. His life is a constant tussle with adults violent, vicious, fraudulent—and Tom Sawyer. Tom Sawyer has to simulate adventures, and he can even force Huck into simulating some, too. But Huck's adventures are always too real—he is always on "thin ice," always a fugitive, forced to live by his wits. Every time he gets off that raft he finds himself yelped at by dogs and menaced by people. He sees a poor old man shot down in the public street and in a meaningless family feud two boys shot dead. "The boys jumped for the river—both of them hurt—and as they swum down the current the men run along the bank shooting at them and singing out, 'Kill them, kill them!' It made me so sick I most fell out of the tree. I ain't a-going to tell *all* that happened—it would make me sick again if I was to do that. I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night to see such things." As he says when the rascally Duke and Dauphin are tarred, feathered and carried out of town on a rail—"It was a dreadful thing to see. Human beings *can* be awful cruel to one another."

Significantly, Huckleberry Finn speaks in a boy's voice, not in Mark Twain's omniscient adult one. *Huckleberry Finn* is not openly the creation of a middle-aged man fondly remembering his own youth; for once a boy himself talks to us. And although some of the best cracks in *Huckleberry Finn* are really asides by Mark Twain, the book does come back to the literary game *about* boyhood that *Tom Sawyer* represents. *Huckleberry Finn* as a whole, in its unique directness, makes us realize how little, elsewhere in American literature, children as themselves ever speak to us. The general archness, the inevitably too genial stooping down to children, betrays the American desire to keep children forever children. Life must always be fun and games. Even the evil represented by Injun Joe in *Tom Sawyer* is somehow evil painted on a backdrop, as unreal as the unfortunate villain's death in the cave.

Henry James turns children into prodigies. They know too much for their age, and so are pale, visionary and damned. On the whole, they are awful brats—they are what a bachelor fond of his comfort would want children to be: wise like himself, and so responsive to the adult mind as not to be a bother. They are "the beautiful and the damned," and the only children in famous American books who make me think of fairy tales: of a world founded on imagination. But in James's tales the children know too much: they know as much as goblins. Adults, like the governess in *The Turn of the Screw*, watch in amaze-

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ment, fright and despair at how much they know. "The Pupil," where the story of a charlatanish American family abroad and their elaborate, arrogant, shabby deceptions turns characteristically on the exploitation of their little boy (he finally dies because he knows more about the corrupt human heart than any little boy ever should), the tutor who never gets paid but who sticks because of the boy's remarkable attractions "divined on the spot that Morgan wouldn't prove a bore. He would prove on the contrary a source of agitation."

This is indeed what James's children are —not bores; on the contrary, they are a source of agitation. They lack childhood's supreme attribute of unconsciousness; they are all too knowing, watchful, rare. Tom Sawyer, despite his ritual of fun and games, his perverse theorizing of all occasions into "literature," is a Neanderthal to James's precociously knowing brats. Pemberton the tutor says of his pupil—"Where his detachment from most of the things they [the parents] represented had come from was more than an observer could say—it certainly had burrowed under two or three generations. . . . He had the general quality of a child for whom life had not been simplified by school, a kind of homebred sensibility which might have been bad for himself but was charming for others, and a whole range of refinement and perception—little musical vibrations as taking as picked-up airs . . . the results were as appreciable as the marks on a piece of fine porcelain. . . ."

Only James's "situation"—the shady American parents traveling about Europe, dodging and cheating, and finally taking advantage of the unpaid tutor's attachment to abandon the child to him—explains why little Morgan Moreen has to be shown as an American at all. Of course he is no more American than are the little Gainsborough beauties in *The Turn of the Screw*. James could never have described real American children—the kind that caused him to shudder at their lack of decorum when he saw them sleeping in European hotel lobbies; they were not "beautiful" enough, not pictorial enough, not sufficiently accessible to the operatic sudden death by heart "seizure" that so typically is the fate of Morgan in "The Pupil" and of Miles in *The Turn of the Screw*. For James a child is usually a Jamesian fine consciousness whose divination of life is out of all proportion to its experience. A child in Henry James is even a consciousness ironic about its own precocity, which is too much for its physical strength. He is not a child looking for the adult he must become, but an artist searching for an art on which to lavish so much secret knowledge of adults. And he is not related to adults; he is in competition with them. That is why the child in James's stories must die—he does not have the hardihood to compete with adults, although to a macabre extent he lives on their terms.

Only the solitariness of James's child characters makes them "American." Like Huck, they have a painful awareness that their overmastering sense of control, their need to live by their wits, will never be weakened by family tenderness. Like Tom, Penrod, Jimmie Trescott in Crane's *Whilomville Stories*, Holden Caulfield in *The Catcher In The Rye*, they know that adults will never understand *them*. The governess in *The Turn of the Screw* speaks of "those moments of torment that I have described as the moments of my knowing the children to be given to something from which I was barred." Huck Finn, too, has a secret lore on which adults can never trespass. In the world of adult "phonies," Holden Caulfield is a boy-child at *war*. In the legend of children created by American literature, children and adults are of necessity on opposite sides. They represent not different stages of the same human estate, but, supposedly, opposite interests. Of course this is only because children have more rights in America than they have anywhere else; just as the "woman's problem" can exist only in a society where women feel emancipated, so the constant concern with children as a special class can exist only in a society where children have privileges that in Russia are reserved for ballerinas. But even in nineteenth-century American books, where children were still

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"brought up by hand," and where, as Aunt Polly says in *Tom Sawyer* of her dead sister's boy, "I've *got* to do some of my duty by him, or I'll be the ruination of the child"—where parental authority, in short, far from bribing the child with television and comic books so as to be left free for drinks with friends, keeps a sharp lookout so that the child will be brought up right and get to heaven—children and adults still have nothing in common. Whether it is because children are full of the "Old Scratch" all day long, or because of the contrast between parents' cares and childish freedoms, the world these children occupy is a children's world. Adults impinge on this world, they will even look ridiculous in the distorting mirror that children hold up to them, but it is a children's world—full of ritual and code games, mock profanity, shacks in the back yard to which you charge two "sents" admission and in which you sell lemonade and cry "that's *not* fair!" and swear terrible oaths. A children's world is necessarily so complete that it must exclude adult experience—and this, surely, is what Mark Twain meant when he wrote to Howells that *Tom Sawyer* was "simply a hymn, put into prose form to give it a worldly air."

Of course Mark Twain didn't really overlook the pathos of childhood, which lies in its weakness and incomprehension. He simply identified all the promise, all the fullness, all the beauty of the American myth with Tom Sawyer's professional boyishness. Tom, who to us seems such a monster of immaturity when he reappears in *Huckleberry Finn* and puts poor Jim through the tortures of being locked up so that he can be "liberated"—Tom wasn't a monster to Mark Twain, far from it; he was just a good old American boy in the dear old American summertime; he was Hannibal as a permanent truancy from life. He was imagination as pure will, the past totally reduced to jollity. And this reduction necessarily excluded adult values, intimations of adulthood, any real disturbance. "My boy," said Mark Twain to Tom Sawyer as he put him through his paces, "thank God you will never have to suffer as I suffered."

Tom Sawyer never gets into the adult world at all. Yet even in *Huckleberry Finn* it is observation of the adult world, more than participation in it, more than any *interest* in it, that characterizes the boy as hero. Spiritually, at least, the interests of children and adults are still opposed. They are what *classes* represent in less fortunate countries. And it is this valuing of youth, of the special vibration of youth, the ingenuous genius of Huck giving everything back to us as his honest, unvarnished reaction, that makes up the charm of *Huckleberry Finn* to our generation, which no longer respects gentility even when it practices it. Nowadays we are all on Huck's side, warts and all, and believe him to be wise. When the book came out in 1885, the Boston *Advertiser* called the book a failure, the Springfield *Republican* called it vulgar, and the Concord Library excluded it as "trash and suitable only for the slums." But its wariness about civilization and society and culture has become our kind of truth. For us *Huckleberry Finn* has become so valuable that even the sections in which Tom reappears—Hemingway called all this last part "cheating"—are now justified by the learned. It is not acceptable to us that Mark Twain should have had no very great purpose in mind when he brought Tom Sawyer back into the book, that he just ran down, as he did in all his books. We are all for *Huckleberry Finn*. Of course, we all know that it is not a faultless work of art, and we can hardly claim that Mark Twain saw as much in the book as we do now. But all our own longings for freedom of movement, for spontaneity and openness, all our own despair of the exactions and conformities that surround us, are somehow justified by the power and humor of *Huckleberry Finn*. When a boy's book takes the form of so much skepticism, so much animal resistance, so much distrust of society's arrangements and catchwords, we, in our reluctant respectability, cannot help valuing *Huckleberry Finn* over all American books. For the book says that truth exists rebelliously, that the individual and society are irreconcilable, that "society" is the biggest family of all, the most tyrannical fam-

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ily. Holden Caulfield says that the world around him is full of phonies and laments that he can't reach his own family, the only human island in this sea of phonies. Huck says that a family itself is the key to society, and he doesn't want any part of either. He doesn't suffer from the modern disease of loneliness, for he can still make up his own mind. Truth for him exists only where it remains unformulated by society.

The basic opposition between childhood and adults can thus reflect not nostalgia only, but also a political distrust of the explicit, the habitual, the organized system. In the terms presented by many American writers, childhood is pure because it has escaped the organized consciousness. It does not live by the letter. If innocence is the supreme political value, children can be heroes.

Yet the greatest value of our books about children is the charm of initiation they describe, the delight in the "new" for the immediacy it conveys. Surely it is this picture of youth rising to a fateful first encounter—with the Bible, with a Victorian parlor, with a circus, with a murder, with the Mississippi at sunrise—that gives the language of *Huckleberry Finn* its natural rhythm. First impressions, the aspect of discovery, interested Mark Twain more than anything else. This content of the American myth will endure forever, for as Fitzgerald says at the end of *The Great Gatsby*, "for a transitory enchanted moment man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, compelled into an esthetic contemplation he neither understood nor desired, face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder." In the New World men have made "a tradition of the new." The keenness of this first, fresh experience is what gives the best of American books their supreme attribute of charm. To Europeans the very idea of tragedy (their supreme literary form) is that it wrests a shock of recognition, an unexpected depth of meaning, out of the recurrences of human sorrow. To a writer like Mark Twain (and Henry James) the individual's initial shock of experience is more dramatic than the meaning he can take away from his struggles. The possibility of experience as discovery is the one great meaning in life that American writers have agreed on. They have agreed that the best of all things is to be young, to feel experience as a thrill, to "have" experiences—which means to contain them and to enjoy them, not to be downed by life, but to be able to rise to new possibilities, in every generation and at any age.

Surely it is for this high note of possibility, of that thrilling first encounter, that children are so important to our literature —even adult characters tend to be young. I know that Hester Prynne is not a child, that Uncle Tom is too saintly to be a child, that Nigger Jim is a runaway slave and Captain Ahab obsessed with ideas. But notice that such adult characters are simply not free enough to be American children. Whenever life gets so comfortable that the problems of the characters are merely domestic, as they are in *Tom Sawyer*, in Hemingway's stories about his early self, in Salinger, you get people who, given their capacity to enjoy experience, do nothing but try for that first rapturous contact with experience. After all, how much of a grown-up man is Melville's Ishmael? Why is the most famous moment in all of Henry James the outcry by Lambert Strether in *The Ambassadors* that one must "live"? Did the Thoreau who in *Walden* is so content with everything but human relations ever grow up to *have* any human relations? Since such relationships are, by definition, based on repetition and are enclosed by familiarity, Thoreau avoided them, and wrote as if the water in Walden Pond was different every time he went in. How grown-up was Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson? Is Leatherstocking a *person* as well as a scout? Do Poe's zombies ever have any significant experience outside that first delicious *frisson* in cellars, decaying castles and cemeteries? Billy Budd dies of his first contact with evil, Jay Gatsby of *his* disappointment, and George F. Babbitt tells his son that he has never done anything in all his life he wanted to. Is there a male hero in all of Hemingway

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who is not charmingly immature? Is there a single character in Salinger, including Mrs. Glass, mother of all the little Glasses, who suggests anything complex, settled, ripe, sage? Is Augie March mature? Anyone in Truman Capote? In the novels of Norman Mailer, James Baldwin, Carson McCullers? Has any of them done anything he wanted to? Yes, he did once . . . and is still remembering it.

That is what youth does: it has first experiences. Adulthood is by contrast a series of repetitions, and as the round gets ever more familiar, the only compensation is insight, illumination. Yet who, remembering the intensity of his youth, could claim that "maturity" is a pleasant reward, that it is like a prize for having behaved well in youth? Who would claim that in America, at least, "mature" writers write better than passionate young writers—that resignation affords our writers greater understanding than passion does?

❧

The cult of youth engenders the cult of "maturity." I have come to distrust this word: it really stands for what *youth* hopes to give itself. At the end of Truman Capote's *Other Voices, Other Rooms* it is suggested that the young man can now enter into maturity, although it is clear that he has already hardened permanently into precocity. This is the typical note on which so many psychological documents about youth end today. The constant invocation of "maturity" in American novels, as in American society generally, suggests that Americans think of maturity as something that youth can acquire by training and will; it reads like a reward to youth for being *nice*. The fiction is perpetuated that maturity costs nothing, involves no deprivation.

People who write this way seem not to understand how little youth and maturity have to do with one another, how little youth is prepared for the other. Yet getting older is what no one can prepare for. No one anticipates it. Why, then, do the same people who make such a cult of "youth" sound so respectful of "maturity"? It is because they want dignity without getting older. They want to be "wise" but never have a thought of death.

❧

Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour*, William March's *The Bad Seed*—little villains at last, dramatic versions of Stephen Crane's sharp saying that children are "little blood-fanged wolves." *Tom Sawyer* belongs to an age when adults liked to sound as goody-goody as children; these new fables correspond to our Freudian knowledge of our own depravity. Children can slander, children can conspire, children can help to kill.

Dramatically this is sure fire, like Iago, who in Verdi's opera adores a "cruel God." We see the fuse being lit, the poison being measured out, and the effect is enormous. Where else in contemporary literature do villains, as in classical drama, prepare their plots before our eyes? Of course we do not believe that these infant villains are *really* responsible—circumstances explain everything, bad blood, unfortunate conditions at home, *et cetera*. That's why these dramas shock us merely. Nevertheless, they give us a marvellous time. The skullduggery is refreshing. At the play made out of March's *The Bad Seed*, an American audience gasped as it hadn't since Lincoln was shot. Incredulity, shock, horror. Can these be *children*? Delicious!

❧

Stephen Crane's *Whilomville Stories*, published the year he died, 1900, is really not a very good book. But a genius wrote it. Even when Crane recited the harmless romps and plays of his little Jimmie Trescott and his pals, he managed to suggest that the *world* these children were living in was no longer innocent. "They had reached the old death-colored snake-fence which marked the limits of the upper pasture of the Fleming farm." In the tired playfulness of the Whilomville stories, such imagery is a drop of acid. Whilomville is still the dear little American town, the overgrown village, leisurely and easy like the villages on which all fables of child-

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hood in America rest. But it is big enough for every type to appear in it. It is Tom Sawyer's "St. Petersburg" and Tom Bailey's "Rivermouth" and Penrod Schofield's middle-sized city in Indiana, but of all these towns, it is the abstraction—"Although Whilomville was in no sense a summer resort, the advent of the warm season meant much to it, for then came visitors from the city—people of considerable confidence—alighting upon their country cousins. . . . The town . . . drawled and drowsed through long months during which nothing was worse than the white dust which arose behind every vehicle at blinding noon, and nothing was finer than the cool sheen of the hose sprays over the cropped lawns under the many maples in the twilight."

In this world little Jimmie Trescott knows no greater sorrow than to discover that the Presbyterian Sunday School has decided not to have a tree this Christmas, but will spend the money on the poor Chinese. He transfers to another Sunday school, and discovers that the Christmas tree will be skipped here, too. Ah, how kind and protective Americans are in these stories to their less fortunate brothers! And Negroes, who appear in these stories as handymen, are described as uniformly lazy and irritable, shirking hard work, humorously irresponsible, like children. But this same Whilomville, three years earlier, was the site of one of Crane's very greatest stories, "The Monster"—the story of the Negro servant who burst into Dr. Trescott's burning house to save little Jimmie, and falling under a rain of chemicals exploding in Dr. Trescott's laboratory, literally lost his face. He became a "monster" whom no one would keep, whom everyone was afraid of —except Dr. Trescott, who felt that he owed his son's life to Henry.

The people in town boycotted Dr. Trescott and avoided his house. They became an ugly mob. All this takes place in Whilomville, where we all once lived in America with Tom and Huck and Penrod. In Whilomville, now, the newfangled electric arc lights throw ominous shadows. The crowd in the park, under those arc lights, is strangely full of people who look exactly alike. Everything is lighted brilliantly, and yet the light is ominous. "The wind waved the leaves of the maples, and, high in the air, the blue-burning globes of the arc lights caused the wonderful traceries of leaf shadows on the ground. When the light fell upon the upturned face of a girl, it caused it to glow with a wonderful pallor. . . . In the shivering light, which gave to the park an effect like a great vaulted hall, the throng swarmed, with a gentle murmur of dresses switching the turf, and with a steady hum of voices."

In this severe and terrible story, a child plays a classic role—a child is the human creature that must be saved at all costs. Yet what Stephen Crane is saying in "The Monster," as only Mark Twain had said it—passingly—in *Huckleberry Finn*, is that this world may no longer be *safe* for children.

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Telltale Dust

PAUL B. SEARS

AMONG THE MANY THINGS that have given me pleasure and understanding I have chosen one whose very name suggests dryness and, by metonymy, the intolerably dull. Yet in a curious way it has drawn together the most diverse experiences. Although my chief business for half a century has been to teach, dust of one sort or another has challenged me to continuing research and led out into the rich field of human values and behavior. Here is what I wrote in 1935, when I was attempting to explain the background of a great regional disaster, the western dust storms.

Dust itself is nothing new. Like the circle, it is a symbol of eternal time. Long before the days of the microscope and the chemical balance it was understood that dust is the beginning and end of all things. Dust is always in the air we breathe, an invisible world of tiny, buoyant particles, infinitely rich in its variety, and with laws of its own. While most people think of it as being only minute bits of earth stirred up by strong air currents, it contains a host of living organisms, bacteria, molds, pollen, animals, as well as fragments of material from larger plants and animals. Except perhaps in air newly washed by rain, these float about perpetually sustained by gentle drifts in the atmosphere of which the human senses are scarcely aware. Even such a giant citizen of the world of dust as the plumed dandelion fruit will remain afloat indefinitely in a breeze of not more than three miles an hour. The microscopic grains of pollen and fungus spores, capable of ascent to the stratosphere, have their own curious globular symmetry, often richly marked, but with neither right nor left, top nor bottom, as fitted to the ocean of air as the fish, the fly, the elephant may be to the respective worlds in which they live. With the rising and falling of the currents the particles of dust, living and dead, are perpetually renewed, perpetually settling out. The world of dust is never at rest, and the potential energy of the surfaces of the granules in it is enormous.

✪ This sixth annual Phi Beta Kappa-Sigma Xi address was presented to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in December, 1963. PAUL B. SEARS, former president of the A.A.A.S. and Director Emeritus of the Conservation Program at Yale University, is author of *Deserts on the March, Life and Environment, Where There Is Life* and *Charles Darwin.*

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The revealing power of dust is known to criminologists and mystery buffs. Do not the sweepings of a hideout—in paperbacks at least—often reveal age, sex, habits and occupations of its recent tenant? Assuredly the wrong shade of face powder, or any at all, on the shoulder of a blue serge suit can be a potent factor in human relations. Lines of rising dust on the distant horizon are traditional clues, whether the observer is concerned with herds of wild animals or those herds of men that we call armies.

Technicians are skilled in using the microscope to identify such powdered stuffs as drugs, foods, adulterants and crystalline materials. I recall a geology student who had somehow taken no course in chemical analysis until his senior year. But then he romped through his "unknowns" by evaporating them and identifying the crystals, to the disgust of his laboratory instructor. Even if Pasteur had never explained the role of microorganisms in fermentation and disease he would still be celebrated in the history of science for observing that the tiny crystals of tartrate were of two forms, each a mirror image of the other, with correspondingly different relations to polarized light and opposing symmetry of molecular pattern.

The solemn intonation "dust to dust" symbolizes the bond between humanist and scientist, and indeed ties all mankind to past and future. From the archeologist we have accounts of the opening of hermetically sealed coffins, catching a fleeting view of the lifelike features within, then having them dissolve into impalpable dust before his eyes.

Belzoni, the Italian pioneer who explored the tombs in the Valley of the Kings between 1815 and 1820, has given us a vivid account of the choking dust within the long caverns of the dead. He notes that he had been blessed with no sense of smell, but even so could taste the imponderable effluvia of the mummies, and that breathing in the still air was so difficult that he had to pause from time to time to recover his strength to proceed.

I have found no account of the microscopic examination of this ultimate dust, although doubtless such accounts exist. Probably chemical methods would reveal its origin where studies of structure would fail, for animal proteins and fats tend to lose all traces of organization very rapidly while retaining much of their original

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composition. Bones and teeth may persist, but these lie outside the realm of dust. Within the realm, however, some of the most durable animal structures seem to be those of chitin, such as the external skeleton of insects. And since the cells of plants are usually enclosed in walls, some, notably those of pollen, are often well preserved.

Whatever the size or source of particles, they must be dry to become dust. Thus the mere presence of dust, as well as its make-up, often has a story to tell. Covering the surface in northern China, the interior of Europe and thousands of square miles in our own Midwest are great blankets of fine material called *loess,* one of those words that you pronounce as you please—less, lerse, low-ess, for example. Explanations of its origin were once equally diverse. They are no longer so. For this tawny stuff, so easily eroded into vertical canyons when its plant cover is removed, bespeaks episodes in earth history.

Those episodes were the wanings, generally called retreats, of the great continental glaciers and their lesser alpine counterparts. During this process vast amounts of material that had been picked up by the moving ice were carried outward in the meltwater. Boulders, gravel, sand, silt and clay were dropped in that order, the finer particles being carried farthest from the ice front. Here the stuff eventually dried and was moved in massive amounts by the wind to its present location. From this we infer that, whatever the cause of glaciation, its disappearance involved a period of climatic aridity—an assumption supported by other evidence, from a different kind of dust.

In Wyoming a road leads west from Laramie toward the Snowy Range. Paralleling it on the south is a deep trench, miles long and wide, from which ancient winds have excavated fine material that had been washed eastward from old mountain glaciers. By contrast as one looks northward along the plateau, he may see the wind-dug ruts of the wagon trains, made more than a century ago. And across the bed of Lake Chalco near Mexico City runs a road whose bed has been lowered by the wind two or three feet since the lake was drained about 1900. So the movement of dust may record disturbance by man as well as phases of past climate.

But although dust is born of desiccation, it helps to counter

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that condition. Cloud moisture condenses into droplets around the dust particles of the atmosphere, then falls as rain. Dust particles easily acquire electrical charges attractive to substances with a charge of opposite sign, while repelling those of similar sign. Such mutual repulsion of dust particles may help keep them suspended in air, where they may add vivid color to the sunset, or if confined in mine or grain elevator, produce spontaneous explosion.

One could go on indefinitely with this miscellany concerning dust. I think, for example, of its similarity in behavior to atomized liquids, brought home to us years ago in Oklahoma when our car was covered with a film of oil from the famous well known as Wild Mary Sudik, many miles away. Then there are the pros and cons of dusting crops with protective poisons from the air, not to do more than mention the technical problem of a proper electrical charge if such dust is to adhere effectively to the leaves it is intended to protect. And finally our recent interest in outer space has stimulated the study of dust belts far above the earth.

My own experiences as a naturalist have involved dust in seemingly diverse ways, and yet, as time has gone on, they have fused together to enrich my understanding and appreciation. Granting freely that science, like the law, is a jealous mistress, it is high time we get rid of the mischievous nonsense that has given so many of us an emotional block against it, and a feeling that it is something to be left to the strictly specialized professionals. In my judgment it not only can contribute mightily to the enjoyment of the amateur, but will continue to need him.

I have never questioned that research is one of the privileges of the teacher of science. Early in the game I was intrigued by two very different and seemingly unrelated problems. One was the microscopic study of those remarkable bearers of life and heredity that we call pollen. The other involved the reconstruction of the original vegetation of my native state, Ohio, as it was at the time of the white man's invasion.

Thanks to the meticulous records left by the first surveyors, who began their work in the 1780's, it was possible to get a network of original conditions. At each milepost these woodsmen left a description of the kinds of trees, or if there were none, recorded that fact by setting a post in the prairie or other treeless location.

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Now Ohio is in a climate well-suited to the growth of forest, but as it turned out a considerable area—perhaps ten percent—had been treeless. Some of these treeless areas were occupied by bogs whose vegetation is most appropriate to Canadian muskeg and tundra. Others were covered by waving carpets of prairie plants—the bluestem grasses, goldenrods, rosinweed, black-eyed Susan, purple blazing star and other western species more at home in Iowa and Nebraska than in the forest climate of Ohio. How explain the presence of such foreign enclaves? We have a similar problem in explaining the presence of Chinatown in San Francisco and the French Quarter in New Orleans. Both, we know, are survivals from conditions in the past that no longer prevail. This in biology we call the historical factor.

So far as the bogs of northern plants were concerned, it had already been established that these were remnants of what had once been the prevailing vegetation in the cold moist climate on the heels of the retreating glaciers. But the prairies were a more difficult matter. Presently it was suggested that they too were relicts or survivors of a somewhat later climatic phase, warmer and drier than the present. If such a phase had indeed existed, it would certainly have favored the eastward spread of life from the midcontinent. The problem we faced in the early 1920's was to get the evidence.

At this stage in our inquiry we learned, thanks to the Scandinavians, that the evidence could be obtained from dust although not the powdered earth that we usually think of as dust. Rather it was the golden dust from flowering plants that we call pollen. While the pollen of most plants is scant and sticky, suited to transport by insects, that of the trees, grasses, sedges and such plants as sagebrush which dominate their particular landscapes and reflect its climatic controls is dry, dusty and abundant. Thus it is admirably suited to be broadcast by the wind. As every hay fever victim knows, this is a remarkably thorough process.

In consequence much of it falls into whatever swamps, bogs and lakes there are in the region. When this happens, the pollen walls, with their characteristic forms and markings, are frequently embalmed. And as the lakes fill up with muds, and organic materials accumulate, we have the same phenomenon that delights the

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archeologist, poring over the layers of an ancient city dump. The microscopic pollen in successive layers of sediment affords a clue to the successive types of vegetation that have grown up in the vicinity of the basin in which they have been preserved. By identifying and counting the proportions of different kinds of pollen, changes can be traced. And, since vegetation is the best integrator of climate that we have, past changes of climate can be inferred reasonably well. This procedure is called pollen analysis or, more technically, palynology.

Here then was a method we could use to determine whether there had been, in fact, a warmer and drier time than the present since the retreat of the great glaciers from Ohio. Boring into the sediments there we found abundant pollen, but the first problem was to identify it. I was obliged to spend considerable time, handicapped as I was by other duties, lack of literature and distance from Ohio, in acquiring a knowledge of pollen types that can be acquired by students today within a few weeks at most.

By 1930 we had worked out the general record of changes preserved in the muds and peats that had accumulated in various depressions left by the receding glaciers. In the oldest, that is the bottom, layers, we found mostly the pollen of spruce that today forms the boreal forest extending north to the tree limit in Canada. Curiously, however, in the layers next above and younger, spruce was gradually replaced by pine. I say curiously because where the two are found together, the light-loving pine is the pioneer, serving as a nurse crop to the spruce that comes on in its shade and replaces it. This reversal of the usual sequence was strong indication that the cold, moist climate that favors spruce but excludes pine had shifted to one that was warmer and drier.

Meanwhile the broad-leaved deciduous trees were beginning to contribute more of the pollen, and eventually nearly all of it. The pine period seems to have ended in a moister one marked by hemlock and beech, but thereafter came another dry—and warm —episode during which hickory and oak reached a maximum to give way more recently to the moisture-loving beech. Without laboring details, it is enough to say at this juncture that forests of the past, changing in response to changing patterns of moisture and temperature, had strewn their record about in the form of that

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living dust called pollen. And enough of this pollen had been preserved in orderly sequence in lakes and bogs to show that much of postglacial time, save for a brief midspan, had been drier and largely warmer than today.

And since the great climatic gradient from cool-moist to warm-dry runs diagonally athwart North America from northeast to southwest, the most reasonable explanation of grassland enclaves in the now forest climate of Ohio seems to be that they are remnants of a once massive shift as aridity expanded northeastward along this gradient. As it later retreated, these enclaves remained in possession where conditions, not yet fully understood, favored their persistence.

The essentials of this story have since been confirmed in numerous laboratories. But like any scientific findings, these served only to whet the appetite. Since the basins studied had all been covered by the last ice, where could we find a longer record, one that was being compiled while the glaciers were active toward the north? How far did the influence of glacial climate extend? What, after all, is the pattern and meaning of climatic change? What time scale has been involved? How does change involve man himself? Our chance to go into these problems was delayed until 1948.

Meanwhile the Arizona astronomer Dr. Andrew Douglass, concerned with the recurrence of sunspots, began to study their possible relation to weather conditions on earth. For this purpose he used the patterns of growth rings in trees, since their thickness in successive years is an indication of the available moisture in the arid Southwest. He, and the workers who followed him, have traced this record back through the Christian era. For our purpose here the important finding has been that moist years tend to come in groups, alternating with groups of dry ones. Drought, then, is as certain to recur as death and taxes, although the so-called cycles are of irregular length, not exactly predictable. Within the larger swings of climate there are lesser ones.

During my years at Nebraska—1920-28—I had acquired great respect for the ability of native grassland cover to hold the soil in place in that often windy climate, and of this cover to survive the toughest natural conditions. I had seen the pitiful results of homesteading in the Sandhills, where great blowouts followed the plow.

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I had learned of the vicious political attack upon the geographer Nels Bengtson when he had warned that this would happen. And my trouble in putting a microscopic edge on my laboratory razor made me keenly aware of the constant presence of gritty dust there and later in Oklahoma.

In Oklahoma the Roaring Twenties were thunderous, thanks to oil and wheat. The level shortgrass country of the semi-arid High Plains west of the prairie proper was admirably suited to machine farming. During the years of World War I and the following decade there was moisture enough to mass-produce wheat at costs ruinous to competing farmers farther east. Even when prices fell, the dry farming of wheat continued. I recall being brushed off by an official who had just flown west and back in his own plane and was jubilant over the fact that another hundred thousand acres of sod had been plowed up. He regarded me as slightly touched when I suggested that dry years were sure to come and that when they did, crops would fail and the land blow away.

This is precisely what happened. Following the wheat harvest in the summer of 1931 there was no rain. Wheat was planted as usual in the autumn, but failed to germinate in the dry soil. Then came the windy spring, bringing a sardonic joke from Nature. A great dark curtain of cloud across the western sky seemed to promise the needed rain. Instead of that it showered us with drifting dust, whose gritty, pervasive insistence made itself known as far east as the Atlantic Seaboard, eventually to dramatize as nothing else had done, the danger of misusing the landscape.

Meanwhile, in line with my duty—and pleasure—as a botanist I had done field work over much of the state, often in company with the late great climatologist, Warren Thornthwaite, then a struggling junior colleague. Continuing this work after the great dust storms were under way, we saw for ourselves the physical disaster and subsequent migrations that John Steinbeck so vividly described in *The Grapes of Wrath.*

As the grim trouble grew and persisted, so did pressure upon public officials and institutions. At length an emissary made the rounds to find out what university scientists were doing or could do. Were we trying experiments or looking at the dust under a microscope? Actually the experiment had been set up for us on a

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vast scale by the dry farmer. Nor was anything to be gained by looking at the dust to see whence it came. Field work and reluctant newspaper reports told that. But what was lacking and sorely needed was public understanding of some of the facts of life in a marginal environment. My contribution was a book for the Oklahoma University Press in which I tried not only to explain the current dust storms, but to place them in the broad perspective of man's historical relation to the land.

Although I was not aware of it at the time, George Perkins Marsh had long before written a much more elaborate analysis of man's role as an often destructive force in nature. His book, first printed in 1864, went through four editions in twenty years, but so far as one could guess from any residual impact on the public mind, it might never have been issued. The same can be said of Major John Powell's report to the government in 1879 on the proper use of the arid lands of the West. Had Powell been listened to, tragedy and frustration on a grand scale could have been averted, for he saw in water and its conservation the key to economic survival in the deep Southwest.

But even after the appearance of many books written after 1935 by others, there were protests against the idea that man had been largely responsible for the decade of dust and even against the idea that his actions had seriously lowered the potential of environment. The tenor of these objections was based on the indubitable fact that there had been cycles of heavy erosion by wind and water in the geological past and that what had happened during the 1930's was merely, so to speak, the normal kind of abnormality, bound to happen whether man was present or not. As a document to counter this idea I would suggest a neglected book, written by a young farmer, Lawrence Svobida, called *An Empire of Dust* and illustrated with one of the finest collections of photographs of the storms and their effects that I have seen.

There were other protests that had nothing to do with technical merits, but arose from self-interest. Some of these took the form of attempts to suppress or gild the facts. One of the outcomes of the new concern over erosion by wind and water was legislation allowing farmers to organize and receive technical help to avoid future trouble. It was my lot to assist in drafting an early act of

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this sort for Oklahoma in 1937. Leaders in the powerful public utilities industry sensed the importance of this measure to the future economy of the state and helped get it through a legislature whose leader was none too enthusiastic. By contrast, a young official in a famous eastern institution, who had asked me to give a talk explaining this measure, was cashiered by a wealthy patron for bringing in "a goddamned red." My politics, incidentally, are probably a bit to the right of Herbert Hoover.

The costly experience of the 1930's had its compensations, for it served to dramatize the importance of the soil and its care. In many areas of the Southwest it led to improved practices favoring a more permanent type of land use. But the moister conditions of the 1940's and the pressures of a second war led in many cases to a renewal of the old destructive practices. Dry weather returned in the early 1950's, and the air traveler could see clearly the lee-side drifts of loose soil on improperly managed fields, as well as the dust clouds rising from them.

Meanwhile I had returned to Ohio and continued to work as time allowed on the details of climatic history as revealed by the golden dust from flowers. Then in 1948 came the first of several opportunities to visit Mexico.

Allow me to relate two experiences, not in the order in which they occurred, but because they were symbolic. Once, passing through the low and humid *tierra caliente,* or hot country, we drove on a road bordered by gloomy tropical forest. Gradually we became aware of a dense cloud of multicolored tropical butterflies. Despite their fascination, there was something faintly sinister as they seemed to fly lower and lower in front of our car. At length we started up a hill, but as we did so the engine began to labor and barely made it to the top, where it stopped. On getting out we found our radiator completely sealed by the bodies of our gorgeous escort. I mention this because among the objects that settle out of the air onto our microscope slides we frequently find scales from the wings of butterflies. Here was proof that the source of supply can be ample to account for such finds and a reminder that the elaborate mechanisms of our technological civilization can be vulnerable to seemingly trivial events in nature.

The other experience came as we first entered the great basin

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of Mexico, approaching the city from the north. Before and above us rose a thin but somber curtain of gray, which deepened as we advanced and which I recognized from my earlier experience in Oklahoma to be dust. The meaning of this was to occupy much of our attention in succeeding months.

I had planned to make a leisurely study of land use in Mexico, but shortly I was requested to help, if I could, with a problem that had long troubled students of prehistory. The early cultures had lived for some thousands of years, as evidenced by their burials and artifacts, around lakes within the basin where Mexico City lies. Then at a time estimated to be around 500 B.C. the center of activity had shifted to higher ground at the north end of the basin. Here the great pyramids of Teotihuacan and their accompanying complex of structures had been erected, only to be abandoned more than a thousand years later, perhaps near 900 A.D.

At this time the lake margin agriculture, which made possible the development of empire that so amazed the Spaniards, was renewed. Often referred to as a system of floating gardens, it was rather one of marginal canals and garden beds, highly productive because of the nutrient sediments and abundant water. The question, of course, was whether some environmental change had been responsible for these striking shifts of scene. So far as Indian tradition could be trusted, it supported this possibility, for it mentioned epochs of fire, flood and dust.

With the staunch help of Mexican workers, of whom I shall only mention my revered friend and *tocayo*—that is, namesake (and near twin)—Dr. Pablo Martinez del Rio, we began to collect and examine sediments for fossil pollen and found it. The main theme was supplied by the interplay of oak and pine. Around the basin today, and elsewhere in Mesoamerica as we later found, oak occupies ravines, pine the ridges. On this basis we made our hypothesis that during prolonged dry periods pine would expand in area, invading the ravines below the ridges, while in moist times the oak would be favored and so move upward out of the sheltering ravines.

Using this as a working principle and correlating the pollen profile with archeological evidence, we concluded that the earliest human occupants of the basin had flourished during comparatively

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moist times, after which conditions became successively drier until about the Christian era, when the climate once again became more humid. From this we inferred that the shift of human activity from the basin up to the foothills around 500 B.C. had come as the sequel to prolonged desiccation and that the return to the basin around 900 A.D. had followed a reversal of this trend. In other words, it seemed likely that for centuries the lake levels were too low to support an economy. If this were true, the only recourse would be a move to higher ground, where springs or wells would be fed by the protecting forests above.

Fortunately the basin itself confirmed this supposition. Here are to be found a succession of beach lines. On the highest, the El Risco, have been found the most primitive artifacts. Along a lower beach are fragments of the earliest pottery, with marks of the basketry within which it was shaped before burning. Below this the artifacts become steadily more sophisticated, until the level of the Nahua cultures, which include the Aztecs, is reached. These, of course, were the people of the lake economy whom the Spaniards found.

But here is the crux. Two meters below what we shall, for convenience, call the Aztec level, on land now exposed by drainage, are pre-Aztec artifacts corresponding to the earliest of those found at the pyramid site of Teotihuacan and dating to something like 500 B.C. Clearly, then, there was an interlude during which the lakes had in fact dried up.

To me, at least, these findings had an additional interest. Not only did they show that significant pollen records could be obtained far outside the lake beds of the glaciated area, but that the climatic drifts following glaciation were widespread in North America. The warm dry interval we had found in Ohio had its counterpart in Mexico. And since Mexico City is built upon deep lake sediments, it opened up the possibility of climatic records far older than those we had previously studied.

But first there is the story of man's impact upon this fabulous basin to recount. Buried in the sediments of its older, higher levels are many skeletons of the extinct elephant, the mammoth. That this animal survived until after human invasion is now proved by the presence of stone dart points in some of these remains. An

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intriguing question, still to be answered, is whether the mammoth survived until after the invention of agriculture. Whoever has seen a picture of wild elephants trampling down a cane field will realize that there might have been more reasons than the need for fresh meat to inspire the early hunters if this were the case.

At any rate, the mammoth has been gone for some seven or eight thousand years. Thereafter the developing cultures with their successive techniques and art styles occupied the valley, as we have seen, until forced by the drying of the lakes to move upward in search of water. Here on the foothills clothed with fertile soil and guarded by mountain forests above was apparently reenacted a great historic drama, the rise and fall of power. Some say there are no laws in history, but history is also process and there are laws of process, exemplified not only here, but on the Roman plain, the Grecian archipelago, in the Near East and northern Africa.

The rise of organized power demands the vitality and leisure that come from abundant food. But these very conditions encourage increase in numbers and ultimately this generates more pressure upon the productive landscape than it will bear. The pyramid builders of Teotihuacan evidently cleared the guardian forests above for materials and fuel, notably lime which they burned extravagantly to produce plaster. Then came heavy erosion of the soil itself, manifest in thick deposits below the once great center of activity.

Thus the restoration of old lake levels by the reversal of climate after the Christian era was less an opportunity for expansion than a rescue from conditions that had become—so far as we can judge —untenable on the high ground at the north end of the basin. In this way was avoided the collapse that has so often, in history, followed the exhaustion of the sustaining landscape.

Once culture was reestablished after 900 A.D. by the remarkably productive lake margin gardens within the lower basin there was again a burst of well-nourished vitality. In the end this enabled the Aztecs to become the overlords of other groups, as the Spaniards found them to be in 1519. And with this event began a new chapter in the drama of power—new in detail but not in the basic dynamics of process.

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As promptly and thoroughly as possible the Europeans destroyed not only the materials but the very symbols of the culture they found. So were lost to the natives the old certainties which, however crude and preposterous they may seem to us, are necessary to the survival of any human group, or even, as Pavlov has shown, to the mental health of animals. The native population ceased, for a time, to maintain itself in the face of this clouding. And in the midst of the lakes the invaders set up their own structures from the stones of the old. Moreover they introduced new and potent instruments of change in the form of steel tools and domestic animals.

Within decades the new city in the basin began to suffer from a plague of floods and mud flows. By 1600 this had become so intolerable that the government sought to remedy it by ordering drainage of the lakes, despite the fact that these were the very basis of economic life. To this end they commissioned a remarkable man, engineer and astrologer (astrology then being regarded as a respectable scientific field) Enrico Martinez to carry out the drainage. Actually Martinez was a native of Hamburg, Heinrich Martin, and reputed by some to be of Jewish descent.

Be that as it may, there is a grim humor in the record. He understood perfectly the real source of trouble, which was the reckless clearing of the upland forests and the release of what he called the cattle of the Christians to pasture there. Because of this there was little left to hold the sloping soil and water in place. In his words the hills had become *descarnados*—that is, stripped to the bone. Nevertheless he proceeded with his Herculean commission. His immense cut of Nochistongo, made by hand labor at the northern end of the basin, merely drained the highest of the lakes.

This suicidal enterprise dragged on for three centuries thereafter, being at length completed with the aid of Bucyrus steam shovels in 1900. Until that time one of the lower lakes, Chalco, was bordered by rich gardens and traversed by canoes which brought workers and produce to the city. Much of our study was conducted on the floor of this vanished lake. On one afternoon I counted more than twenty dust devils which gradually coalesced and rose until the whole atmosphere was filled with impalpable dust around and above us.

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Thus it was that even before the Mexican Revolution finally disrupted food production the groundwork was laid for that loss of potential by a policy that dealt with symptoms, not causes. It is a pleasure to record that heroic efforts of the Rockefeller Foundation, collaborating with the Mexican government, have done much to reverse this trend by improving agriculture elsewhere in Mexico. But the rich *chinampas* or gardens are gone, except as occasional cultural fossils in favored spots, and the basin itself no longer fits the rhapsodical sentence of an earlier observer who, looking down upon its verdure from the northern heights, called it *"la región mas transparente del aire."*

Let me make abundantly clear that we have no cause to disparage our neighbors to the south for the events I have just recounted. We have been cushioned against the result of equal errors, not by our greater wisdom, but by the immensity and variety of our great country. And we have been even less tolerant, perhaps even less humane, in our treatment of the native cultures that we have replaced.

At this point I return briefly to the deeper levels under Mexico City, whose record long antedates the coming of man. Here cores have been made in an effort to establish firm foundations for modern buildings. The Palacio de Bellas Artes, for example, had sunk several meters since it was built around 1900, while buildings going back to colonial days often leaned, sank or cracked. Actually this sinking is not new. At the north end of the old Aztec city is the ancient pyramid of Tlatelolco whose base is perhaps ten meters below the present surface and which has been covered by six or seven shells in successive efforts to restore its height. It is probable, however, that the number and mass of European structures combined with heavy pumping of water has aggravated the modern trouble.

Through the generosity of Mexican friends it has been possible to search the cores, one of them seventy meters in length, for wind-strewn evidence of past conditions. This was not easy because of the complex character of the sediments thousands of years old, but the persistence of former colleagues at Oberlin has resulted in a fairly continuous record. Massive changes of climate are indicated, although their precise relation to the events of the glacial

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period remain to be worked out. In some ways the most interesting find was the discovery, near the bottom and far antedating human presence, of pollen identified as that of maize, that remarkable cereal whose later domestication has played a major role in the economy of the Americas and indeed of the world.

Encouraged by the prolonged record from deep cores under Mexico City, our attention has shifted to the ancient lake beds in the southwestern United States. In one of these, the San Augustin Plains of New Mexico, the Oberlin laboratories are now engaged in a study of some 2000 feet of deposits—a laborious and exacting task whose results indicate a record that extends back past the beginning of the Pleistocene or glacial period of the last million years.

Analyses of archeological cave dust in Nevada, of lake sediments in Illinois and Nebraska, and of peat seams along Lake Michigan and Long Island Sound have confirmed our earlier findings as to climatic changes in late and postglacial time. In addition the pollen profile from Guilford, Connecticut (Long Island Sound), is consistent with other evidence indicating that the rate of rise of sea level was reduced by almost half following the end of the great postglacial dry-warm interval that ended around 2000 years ago. This is of interest since sea level has varied inversely with the volume of world ice.

Quite recently, on a visit to the new National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado, I learned more of the continuing role of dust in the modern world, both near the surface and at high elevations. Over half of the dust in the lower atmosphere is composed of local earth particles, about one quarter contains carbon, evidently of industrial origin, while the remaining quarter is of miscellaneous makeup, including tiny salt crystals, whose origin raises some interesting questions. After all, three fourths of the earth's surface is covered by oceans whose foaming wave crests feed salt crystals to the winds.

On this same visit I twice watched the morning rise of dust and smog. It began as a distant low cloud over the plains east of Denver, obviously from the fields, then swung in, gathering material from the city itself, rising and spreading much as I had seen with the dust devils on the dry bed of Lake Chalco, until it formed a con-

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tinuous blanket. Unquestionably here, as to a much greater degree in other urban areas, human activity is well on its way toward making that once free good, namely pure air, an increasingly rare luxury.

Older pilots have noted the spread and rise of haze since the early days of aviation. The new National Observatory at Kitt's Peak in Arizona was placed high to secure clear vision, yet even there the haze is slowly rising each year. These efforts of the astronomers to rise above, and those of city dwellers to move out beyond, the zones of contamination remind me of the outward shifting, during my lifetime, of the water intake of Cleveland to get beyond the spreading zone of wastes that pour into the once limpid waters of Lake Erie. Man has in truth, through his intensive applications of science without regard to long-range consequences, triggered changes that are making his world less fit for those who will succeed him in future generations. A truly scientific civilization will use the perspective, and not merely the expedients, that science alone can supply.

If there is a lesson here, it is that the support of science must not depend solely upon its immediate and visible use for profit. We have had lately a rash of ridicule directed at research projects that seem utterly unrelated to practical life. I recall the mixture of amusement and scorn that, some time around 1920, greeted the news that scientists at Johns Hopkins were working on a proper diet for rats. Yet this was a pioneer study on vitamins and many who today are free from rickets and blessed with sound teeth owe their good fortune to this seemingly frivolous enterprise.

I have tried in the preceding remarks to show that research and teaching can be carried on together, not only as a duty, but as an immensely rewarding privilege. I have also tried to show how the most seemingly diverse interests of the individual scientist can converge and also how they can be brought to bear upon matters of human concern and welfare, provided the scientist is free to pursue them. And I would like to remind you that, whatever its cost, science is the most economical way, if used aright, for humanity to gain the knowledge and experience it needs to secure safe and happy survival as the dominant organism on our five-billion-year-old planet.

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Wetharryngton

Scholia on Hannah Arendt

GERALD W. JOHNSON

"I REFUTE HIM THUS," said Samuel Johnson, kicking a stone and thereby disposing of George Berkeley and his Subjective Idealism, at least to the satisfaction of Boswell.

When I opened the Autumn 1963 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR to the article, "Man's Conquest of Space," by Hannah Arendt, it was my hope that she would leave Heisenberg & Co. laid out in lavender as neatly, but it was not to be. I should not have expected it. Lexicographers are notoriously careless with words to an extent that philosophers cannot risk; Dr. Arendt had to proceed more warily than Dr. Johnson. Nevertheless she did expose a situation vastly entertaining to a reader qualified to be a spectator only, not a participant in the battle of ideas. She illuminated the way in which modern philosophical thought has veered around until it now stands, as it were, back to back with Bishop Berkeley.

As a layman understands it, the Bishop's position was that while Johnson was undoubtedly there, the only direct evidence of the existence of the stone was a sensory perception in Johnson's foot, and as sensory perceptions are notoriously fallacious, the existence of the stone is open to doubt. In Arendt's presentation, the position of modern science is that while the stone was undoubtedly there, the only evidence of Johnson's existence is the historical record and as history, in Walpole's words, "must be false," the existence of Johnson is open to doubt. Which would seem to be Berkeley turned around and facing the other way.

Arendt quotes Niels Bohr as saying, "Only by renouncing an

GERALD W. JOHNSON's most recent work is a commentary on the American ignorance of the practice of political freedom, to be published by Morrow this spring.

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explanation of life in the ordinary sense do we gain a possibility of taking into account its characteristics." It is only fair to note Arendt's concession that in this utterance Bohr was using words although his own work had gone far to render futile the employment of words to convey an idea that may be expressed in mathematical symbols but that cannot be described in words, symbols or anything else. The utterance, therefore, is necessarily cloudy; but even had it been put in mathematical symbols, one gathers that it would have remained incomprehensible.

Yet it is not vacuous. This assertion that we must admit that life as we have known it does not exist before we can understand life as we have known it, touches reality at some point; but it is a point beyond the intellectual reach, not merely of ordinary persons, but of the most learned scientists. Heisenberg's Principle of Indeterminacy is too much for Heisenberg; yet, put to the test of experimental operations, it works. Therefore it is real.

So it is with much of the advanced science of the Space Age. By manipulating the unimaginable, scientists produce results that the scientists had predicted; and technicians employing the scientists' methods, as a matter of daily routine, produce results that the scientists would willingly have prevented—for example, the definite possibility of the extermination of life on this planet.

Any instrumentality that, when put to the test of experimental use, produces the expected result, is real. Hence some of the unimaginable is real. Where, then, does that leave the imaginable? Part of it, we know, is unreal; the question is as to the rest. Is any of it real, or is reality in fact restricted to what Arendt calls the "meaningless formalism of mathematical signs"?

She arrives at the grim conclusion that "the conquest of space and the science that made it possible have come perilously close to this point. If they should ever reach it in earnest, the stature of man would not simply be lowered by all standards we know of, it would have been destroyed."

So it would seem that under the modern dispensation the good Bishop is not refuted, he is merely reversed. He should have taken the position that while the stone was undoubtedly there, the only evidence of the presence of Samuel Johnson is an extrasensory

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perception of unestablished validity. For Sam without stature is not Sam, or anything else in particular. If the stature of man is to be destroyed, he will be reduced to a geometrical point in space, a *locus* without dimensions whose existence is a mere convention or, to borrow the cynic's definition of history, "a lie agreed upon."

All this is a bit stiff for a reader not versed either in modern science or in modern philosophy but, if it be accepted for the purpose of argument, it illuminates many obscurities in the modern world. Which is to say, while it may not be entirely true, there seems to be something in it. After all, it is not necessary to believe in the corporeal existence of Plato's cave dwellers to receive enlightenment from his allegory, and Arendt's commentary on modern science is, apparently, but an elaboration of that story. In the old philosophy, man the cave dweller was related to reality only through his observation of shadows on the wall. In the new, man is himself the shadow, relating an observer, presumably of some higher order of being, to a reality that for aught we know is beyond and inclusive of our concept of being.

Whatever else may be said of it, this notion does in some measure account for the two-dimensional aspect of modern man. A shadow may have length and breadth, but its depth is only a figure of speech that artists find convenient. For evidence of the prevalence of this condition in the modern world one need look no further than to the experience of Arendt herself. Attending the trial of Eichmann fully prepared to encounter in the defendant a depth of depravity unexampled in human history, she was disconcerted to find only what she called banality, but that might equally well be described as a personality thin to the point of nonexistence, a shadow, itself not even an interruption of a ray of light, but a result of the interruption.

Comparisons, quoth Dogberry, are odorous, so let us refrain from drawing invidious parallels with individuals, restricting our speculation to the issues, rather than the men, that fret and fever American public opinion at present. Three that are certainly among the most conspicuous of these are the cold war, the civil rights agitation, and unemployment as a function of a lagging

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economy. It may be plausibly argued that the debate on each of these is thinner than the personality of Eichmann, as lacking in depth as a shadow on a wall.

Consider, to begin with, the cold war. I do not believe that it will be disputed that the term, "war," has hitherto been associated with the two concepts of victory and defeat. The presumption is that, being engaged in a cold war, we desire victory. But who has given us a statement, in detail and generally accepted, of what would constitute victory in this war? The destruction of Russia? That is doubtful, for it is not immediately apparent what advantage would accrue to us if Russia were wiped out tomorrow, not by any effort of ours, but by pestilence or some convulsion of nature. The disappearance of the Red Army might enable us to save some money by reducing our own standing army, now certainly the most expensive, and probably the most powerful in the world. But even that is not certain, for Red China would remain, and we have a considerable legacy of hatred in Germany, twice beaten to her knees by us, and in Japan, beaten once.

Beyond this problematical thrift, wherein would be our profit from the destruction of Russia? It is hard to descry. Indeed, there is only one outcome of the present situation that would beyond all doubt inure to our benefit; it is not the destruction, but the transformation of Russia in such wise that the two countries might divert the combined resources, in the order of a hundred billions a year, that they are now pouring down the rathole of armament, to some investment that would yield a better return. But discussion of what this investment might be is relegated to the periphery of the debate which has centered on evading military defeat, at first by planting a huge army of occupation in Europe, then evading this evasion by partly supplanting conventional with nuclear weapons, and recently by multiplying those weapons until we have enough to destroy ten Russias—evading the evasion of the evasion. Thinner and thinner and thinner.

For the last few years the most clamorous of all the debates has been that over securing the civil rights of minorities, of which by far the largest is the Negro minority. There can be no question that among civil rights in a democracy the right to vote is funda-

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mental. Without it, all other rights, prerogatives and privileges are undermined; with it, no other right or even privilege can be deemed hopelessly out of reach. To the extent, therefore, that the agitation concerned the right to vote—including, of course, an honest count of the votes—it has been substantial.

Furthermore, it has been extensive, and justly so. Every newspaper reader is aware that the right to vote cannot be denied or abridged by statute except as part of the punishment of crime. The thing is done either by terrorism, sometimes in the form of physical violence, sometimes in that of economic injustice, or by fraud through distortion and misinterpretation of the law. The only sure corrective of such practices is an appeal to the majority's sense of decency, and such an appeal may be made in innumerable forms, all of which have substance.

But civil rights other than the right to vote, however desirable, are not fundamental in the sense that they are unaffected by time, place and circumstance. The danger is that in our preoccupation with secondary civil rights we may neglect the defense of primary civil liberties; and winning rights at the cost of liberties is a net loss.

For instance, when a reputable Negro, say a lawyer or a doctor of irreproachable professional standing, is denied access to a public swimming pool solely on account of his race, he suffers an affront to his dignity, and if he is filled with wrath who shall blame him? But his response to be justifiable should be wrathful and nothing more.

On the other hand, when a Negro newspaperman, native born of native parents, is haled into a United States court and sentenced to fine and imprisonment for traveling, at his own risk, in places where the State Department did not deem it in the interest of the United States for him to travel—as happened in 1963—then the reaction of every citizen, white or black, should be wrathful indeed, but the wrath should be reinforced by terror.

For the decision as to what is in the best interest of the United States is reserved to the people of the United States. If it were not, the whole concept of self-government would be farcical. When any agency of government usurps the right to make that decision it re-

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pudiates the fundamental concept of democracy, which is far more serious than affronting anybody's dignity. Furthermore, it is not racial, for what can be done to a Negro newspaperman can be done to any other citizen, black, white, red, yellow or brown.

To be sure, the people have delegated their authority to the State Department insofar as the conduct of official representatives of the United States is concerned. This is necessary because the act of an agent commits his principal. But the ordinary American citizen is not an agent of the government; on the contrary, the government is his agent. Inasmuch as the authority to negotiate with foreign governments has been delegated to the State Department, it is unlawful for a private citizen to attempt such negotiations; and of course it is unlawful for him to obstruct officials in the performance of their duties.

Furthermore, the issuance of a passport obligates this government to protect the citizen in his lawful activities abroad; but in a turbulent region adequate protection is impossible, so it is reasonable for the Department to refuse to issue a passport valid in such a region. But if a citizen is willing to assume the risk, knowing that if he gets himself killed this country is not obligated to lift a finger, the State Department should take no further interest in his travels. If he comes out alive and unharmed, he should not be treated as a criminal.

American Negroes have a just and double-barreled grievance in that they have never been accorded either the legal or the social status of first-class citizens. The legal status is the responsibility of the government and should be corrected by the government; but the social status is in a different category. Then to concentrate attention on the secondary matter of social status to the neglect of the primary matter of basic liberty is shadowboxing. For the loss of civil liberty would reduce all citizens to the status of the former slaves. When the freedom of all is in danger, a battle over the personal dignity of some is very thin stuff.

Then there is the anomaly of a boom attended by large and increasing unemployment. The wordsmiths—neologizers to the dictionary-makers—have been busy with this as they are with every question of lively current interest. Having worn out, successively,

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seasonal, transitional and technological, they are now calling it structural unemployment, and as structural is by interpretation built-in, for once they have hit upon a word that expresses the idea. Technology, if the word be allowed to cover processes as well as machines, is plainly making it possible to produce an ever-increasing surplus of economic goods with an ever-diminishing number of human workers. The busier an economy with built-in unemployment, the larger will be the number of persons condemned to involuntary idleness.

Two Presidents have proposed to meet this by stimulating the economy by various means, including tax reduction. The labor unions want to meet it by spreading the work through reducing the length of the work week. The Presidents ignored the fact that in stimulating the economy they would also stimulate the built-in unemployment. The unions ignore the fact that the thirty-hour week, and the twenty-hour week, and the ten-hour week will intensify the drive toward automation on the part of employers and encourage the practice of moonlighting on the part of workers.

In the meantime, the undirected economy is partially meeting the crisis by shifting millions of workers into forms of activity nonproductive of economic goods, the so-called "service industries." But many of the alleged services are, in any rational view of society, disservices in that they are futile when they are not pernicious. Yet the untilled field of services that are really serviceable is enormous, greater, perhaps, in the United States than in any other of the more advanced capitalistic nations. It is generally admitted that we could use to advantage twice as many schoolteachers, four times as many policemen, and doubtless ten times as many foresters as are now employed. The list could be extended indefinitely.

Yet the task of analyzing the situation to the end of sorting out the services from the disservices is left almost entirely to sociologists and an occasional parson; but it is questionable that their professional training qualifies either group for the task. I recall the dictum of a distinguished sociologist who estimated, by an undisclosed methodology, that there are 600,000 full-time prostitutes in active practice in this country whereas 250,000 would be ample. I am aware, too, that there are parsons who would account the en-

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tire membership of the Bartenders' Union as surplus labor; but I have known one or two who were plainly of the confraternity of Mr. Martin Dooley, which is to say not without social value.

What the situation demands is serious attention by serious political leaders, in which category I include not only jobholders, extant and would-be, but also those who pontificate on public affairs, in print, in classrooms or on the air. Most of these are hopelessly incapable of either scientific or canonical accuracy, and therefore can come closer to understanding illogical humanity than can men who are committed to any point of view, scientific or philosophical.

But if it is getting that kind of attention the fact is not immediately apparent. The foreground is obscured by a fog of words about stimulating the economy and the fair apportionment of such jobs as exist. The stimulation of society in such wise as to make it appropriate and apply to socially desirable purposes the energy and ability released by technology would—or so it seems to the unlearned—automatically stimulate the economy by creating new jobs faster than automation can abolish old ones, thereby meeting the demands of both the Presidents and the unions.

This is, however, nasty work. It would inevitably involve branding as frivolous and futile many occupations at present respected, nay, revered, because they are highly lucrative. To assert that any moneymaking enterprise should be condemned not because it is demonstrably pernicious, but simply because it is of no earthly use, is regarded as certainly creeping Socialism, probably galloping Communism, and possibly even Antinomianism—against God, against country and against Yale. To do it boldly and resolutely a leader must be a man of substance, endowed with length, breadth *and* thickness, emphatically no shadow.

An incorrigible traditionalist, I persist in regarding Samuel Johnson as such a man. True, nothing now remains of him but the historical record, a shadow of a shade, and if he were here incarnate I doubt that I should be able to explain what made him three-dimensional; but Arendt points out that the teaching of modern science is that through careful manipulation of the uncomprehended and perhaps incomprehensible we may achieve effects that

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we had intended and, presumably, preferred. I therefore deem it not inconceivable that through assiduous study of a substantial man we might learn to put substance into our own thinking, thereby achieving some degree of substantiality ourselves.

It is a speculation pleasing, if idle. At that, it can hardly be more profitless than waging a cold war as Hillary climbed Everest, because it is there; or battling to secure social status for American Negroes while permitting the filching away of civil liberty from all Americans, Negroes included; or undertaking to solve our economic problems by multiplying their complexity.

The question in the Sermon on the Mount, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" is obviously rhetorical. So, I submit, is the reverse: which of you by taking thought can diminish his stature? Cut off a man's legs at the knee and it is done; but that is accomplished by taking action, not thought. This, like Johnson's kick, might seem to bystanders a satisfactory refutation of the position of modern science; but a disconcerting thought intrudes. We may not reduce our stature by taking thought, but in doing battle against the shadows of our problems, rather than against the problems themselves, are we not in fact taking action?

Rather a stunner, that; yet even the suggestion that we may be cutting off our own legs will not quite subdue the invincible optimist. His answer was written long ago, in the ballad of Chevy Chace:

> For Wetharryngton my harte was wo,
> That ever he slayne shulde be;
> For when both his leggis wear hewyne in to,
> Yet he knyled and fought on hys kne.

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Rhenish Night

Translated from the French of Guillaume Apollinaire
by WILLIAM MEREDITH

My glass is filled with a wine that trembles like flame.
Listen, a boatman is singing a slow song
About a moonlight night when seven women came
Out of the river and their hair was green and long.

Now sing and dance until the terrace whirls
And the boatman's slow song fades,
And bring me all the pretty blond-haired girls
With the still gaze and the coiled braids.

The Rhine flows drunk, its vine-leaves training after,
The trembling gold of night is mirrored there;
Like a death-rattle the slow song grows softer
About the nymphs who bewitched the summer with their green hair.

My glass has shattered like a peal of laughter.

✪ WILLIAM MEREDITH's translation of Apollinaire's *Alcools* will be published this spring by Doubleday. Mr. Meredith's books of poetry include *Love Letter from an Impossible Land, Ships and Other Fugitives* and *The Open Sea.*

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College to University—And After

An address given December 11, 1963, before the Convocation celebrating the first year of Hofstra's existence as a university.

JACQUES BARZUN

IT IS AN HONOR AND A PLEASURE to attend this ceremony which marks the first year of a notable change in the life of an important institution. Although everyone is clear about the nature of that change, one does not quite know what to call it: one does not want to say the "transformation" of Hofstra College into Hofstra University, because the College remains; one does not want to say the "elevation" of the one into the other, for the College stands high and any University would be doing well to keep level with it. Finally, one does not want to say the "graduation" of the college—that metaphor is obviously the worst of all. Let us then simply say that Hofstra, following the natural course of things in American higher education, has become a university, having first proved its worth to the demanding public of our day, and received from the guardians of our state system the authority to assume the more comprehensive name.

I shall try in a moment to tell you some of the things that this new name suggests to me—and what it may mean to the country in the future. Right now, as the privileged representative of a sister institution which went through the same mutation eighty years ago, I take leave to congratulate the trustees, the faculty, the students, and the friends of Hofstra on this happy occasion. It is the culmination of many hopes, of a generous vision, of skillful management, and of much hard work, in which the efforts of teachers and students were the determining cause of success. All honor to these men and women, young and old, who for nearly a third of a century have, in the pursuit of their own work, changed the connotation of the name Hofstra from that of a public-spirited family to that of a

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respected seat of learning. Such an achievement is in its quiet way a victory of mind and will, daily renewed, over the forces of error and inertia, over the temptations of sloth and stupidity. It is altogether right that we should rejoice and be grateful to the makers of this spiritual edifice, in which the students now here and those to come can develop and thrive with greater ease, quite as if colleges and universities grew by a natural process, like vegetables.

What I have been saying so far expresses my feelings as an academic delegate to Hofstra University, as a colleague of its members and as a well-wisher to all its works. Now, with your permission, I should like to take a few moments to speak as a detached observer of the larger scene in which the deeds of this day are taking place. What I want to say still has to do with colleges and universities; but it should not be taken as a statement of policy by a university administrator, much less as a program for the future of your university or my own. I want for a few minutes to impersonate the private citizen who looks about him and forms opinions—opinions which may be wrong, but which are at any rate free from partisanship and from professional clichés. Let me repeat that I am not going to *do* anything in pursuance of my remarks—neither start a campaign nor establish an association with seven initials spelling the word HOFSTRA—I shall not even argue with anyone who disagrees with me.

I have just said that I mean to talk about colleges and universities. In casual speech we lump the two together as if they were small variations each of the other. No one here today can continue to think so: there are between a college and a university great differences, which justify our celebration. And we all know what the chief of these differences is: a university gives instruction in professional subjects, gives degrees that open to a man or woman the professions of teaching, medicine, law, business, and the rest. More professions are born every year, for which people qualify by taking combinations of university subjects. Whenever we speak of the country's need for experts in all fields, we imply the existence of universities to provide the training. Nor must we forget the growing shadow of every profession, which is Research, and for which more and more people must be prepared, since so many agencies,

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public and private, offer positions of comfort and prestige to competent researchers.

Let me remind you that this national concern is not new or alien to the American university. A hundred years ago, the American university was created on top of the American college to fill this same need of national leaders in government and the professions. You can on this point read the testimony of John W. Burgess, the founder of the School of Political Science at Columbia, which proved to be the first graduate faculty in the United States. Burgess wanted to prevent through better statesmanship and a wiser public opinion a repetition of the catastrophe of the Civil War, in which he had been caught as a youth of seventeen. He wanted native universities so as to train well-informed public servants—teachers, politicians, diplomats, journalists, captains of industry. This training was to rest upon the solid base of college instruction in what he called "universal history and general literature."

Today, the urge to train has been enlarged by the vast complication of our technological life and the increasing numbers of our population—you know at first hand the intricate details and crushing pressure of these developments. But in all this confusion, what has happened to the American College? Well, there are more colleges than ever before, but I for one find it harder and harder to know what they do and why. There is a very fine sentence in the *Hofstra College Bulletin,* which discusses the difference between college education and university training. It states that whereas "training stresses a tangible salable skill . . . education cultivates reasoning ability, creativity, tolerance, eagerness for new ideas, a sense of history and of potentialities for the future." This is very sanguine, as it should be, but what is the reality? The reality is that the best colleges today are being invaded, not to say dispossessed, by the advance agents of the professions, by men who want to seize upon the young recruit as soon as may be and train him in a "tangible salable skill."

This at any rate is true in the colleges attached to universities. Consider the forces at work. First, it seems desirable to have the great scholar teach undergraduates, and he naturally teaches them as if they were future scholars in his own line, as professionals.

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Then, the young themselves want to get on as quickly as possible, and in the last two years of college they elect a major which relates directly to their future profession. If they are able, they qualify for honors work, which may be defined as premature research. An even stronger influence is that of the young teachers, all Ph.D.'s, who need to establish themselves. This they can do only in one way: by showing productivity in research. Every moment spent otherwise is wasted. Accordingly, these junior scholars decline to teach anything not related to their own specialties. As one of them said to me, they "do not want to teach second-hand subjects." First-hand subjects are necessarily narrow, and what is worse, they are treated as if everyone in the class were to become a professional, a duplicate of his own teacher.

In short, both teachers and students are responding to the spirit of the times. They are impatient with everything that is not directed at the development of talent into competence. The undergraduate who can assist his instructor in the instructor's research, the youth who can get an essay published in a journal, the senior whose program is half made up of graduate courses—these are the models for general envy and emulation. The meaning of this is plain: *the liberal arts tradition is dead or dying.* We may keep talking about the liberal ideals at Commencement but the Commencement platform is their last and only refuge. During the year, the college pursues a professional ideal; during the summer, those who can afford it accelerate. And that acceleration has only one goal—to qualify for a professional job.

Please understand that I am not objecting or criticizing, but only describing. The trend seems to me so clear that to object would be like trying to sweep back the ocean. It would be foolish to repine or try to prolong a tradition which has run its course. It is far better to understand how we come to be where we are, for at the present moment the idea of a university is as confused as the situation of the college. The reasons are evident: the great movement for General Education, which began after the First World War, has in forty years transformed our entire precollegiate schooling. The good high school now gives the historical surveys, the introductions to social science, the great books, that formed the sub-

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stance of general education. What is more, the Advance Placement Program has managed to fill in the old vacuum of the eleventh and twelfth grades with real work, so that more and more freshmen—even without Advance Placement—find the first year of college feeble and repetitious. They've had the calculus; they've had a grown-up course in American history; they've read Homer and Tolstoy—college holds for them no further revelations; it no longer marks the passage from pupil to student, from make-believe exercises to real thought. So that if we stand off and look at the silhouette of the American College—I speak of the solid and serious ones, not the shaky imitation—what we see is the thinning and flattening out of its once distinctive curriculum under pressure from above and below, the high school taking away the lower years; the graduate and professional schools the upper.

What then is happening to the beautiful notion of developing the imaginative and the reasoning powers apart from marketable skill and professional competence? What is happening to contemplation and the cultivating of sensibility and judgment? What is happening to "the four happiest years of my life"? That last boon, certainly, has vanished. If colleges were ever places of elegant leisure, they are so no longer. Look about you on the campus and all you see is anxious preoccupation. Students are married, employed, going to or returning from a conference, apprehensive about examinations, ruled by the clock like the most harried executive. They are not in cloistered halls but in the midst of life—which is why so many are also in the midst of psychiatric treatment.

But the vanishing college and the proliferation of worldly activities on its campus do not mean that the university succeeds in training happy young professionals. They are not happier or younger than they would be if they still enjoyed four years of maturing in the old atmosphere of apparently useless study. They are not younger when they find their footing, because competition forces them to go into postgraduate work—one sheepskin to one sheep is no longer enough. And they are not happier because the professional invasion of college teaching makes for dullness, poor preparation, and a new kind of pretense. No undergraduate can believe that he is going to be at the same time an anthropologist, a

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Milton scholar, an historian, and a chemist. Yet that is what the modern teaching assumes about him in successive hours of the college day. This is bad enough for a boy; it is ridiculous for a girl. The motive to study is inevitably lacking in at least three out of four classes when so conducted, that is, when the listener is not addressed as a person or a citizen, but only as that dreadful model of our age: the useful member of society who must be clothed in qualifications and armed with licenses to practice.

Oddly enough, while the liberal arts college, abetted by the graduate school, is squeezing out the old liberal education, the chief professional schools still ask for it in their candidates for admission. The law schools want students who know some history and can read English; the medical schools want well-rounded men; and the engineering schools profess the greatest respect for the humanities and social sciences. In practice, admissions committees often betray these principles and prefer the candidate whose record shows a positive gluttony for science and mathematics. The committee may be right, although the fair words persist. The upshot is that nowadays the only true believers in the liberal arts tradition are the men of business. They *really* prefer general intelligence, literacy and adaptability. They know, in the first place, that the conditions of their work change so rapidly that no college courses can prepare for it. And they also know how often men in mid-career suddenly feel that their work is not enough to sustain their spirits. Such men turn to the arts, to disinterested reading, in a word to self-cultivation as means of keeping their souls alive. Some business firms even provide instruction of this sort to their care-worn executives—seminars in Plato and round tables on political science—in hopes of restoring the energies by feeding an organ of the soul that has been starved during the professional career. This starvation occurs not only in business but also in the other professions, which are growing more and more like business in their paper-pushing aspects.

Obviously, if starvation by routine has killed off the intellectual appetites there will be nothing to restore; and it is likely that no appetite will last very long if it is neglected from the age of sixteen, when it is just becoming aware of itself. What follows? What fol-

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lows is a proposition you may cry out against, but which seems to me implied in the situation before us: sooner or later the college as we know it will find that it has no proper place in the scheme of things. It will find that the secondary school has added a year or two to its present curriculum; that the graduate school has kidnapped all the college juniors and seniors into its own departments. All that will be left in college is the dean, and he is the most expendable of creatures.

If this happens—and I ask you to remember that I shall do nothing to bring it about, but on the contrary everything to retard it; if this happens—I say, *if:* then the students and the professions and the universities and the nation will benefit in a number of ways. The cost will be emotionally great: we all feel an attachment to that unique institution, the American college. On the strength of this feeling millions "want to go to college" without quite knowing what they may expect from it. In the past, their innocent hopes were not disappointed; now it is the best colleges that disappoint the most, for the reasons I mentioned. So the first benefit of the change will be that students' natural desire for exploring the world of ideas will be fed by secondary school teachers, who still believe and practice general education, instead of deserting their charges to indulge in research.

Next, the professions and the university which trains for them will benefit in having their students' exclusive attention. Finally, that concentrated training can begin a couple of years earlier than now; therefore, the country will benefit through a fresher and larger supply of professionals. Acceleration may then become normal and calm, instead of being special and frantic. All this will occur if—I say again, if—the colleges follow, consciously or unconsciously, the tendency evident in their actions for the last dozen years. Their unrest, their sense of futility, are shown in recent proposals to cut the normal course to three years, or to add a fifth year that would bring with it a graduate degree; their impatience is visible in the programs that lead to a four years' master's degree in teaching, or to a Ph.D. in chemistry in six years, or to various other degrees more quickly by a telescoping of the upper years. This disquiet can only grow as the high schools improve and the

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freshman grows bored, as students begin college in the sophomore year and university work begins in the junior or senior year. At this moment, when one lends an ear, it seems as if a good many bolts were loose in the machine and even though it keeps running, the noises it makes are not reassuring.

All the more reason why we should have at hand the strongest universities we can fashion. Universities are not in any sense a substitute for the college. The mood and tenor of the liberal arts differ from professional training and purpose exactly as the *Hofstra Bulletin* says, and the liberal arts cannot be dispensed with permanently. The question is where to situate them, how to administer them, whom to entrust them to. And in these high matters a strong university which knows what its role is can assist, advise and protect. It can require and enforce the right preparation of its candidates for professional training. In a word, a clear-minded university can dispel both error and confusion. That is why today I am glad that one more university has been added to the older strongholds of learning in the country.

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Last Letter to the Scholar

JEAN GARRIGUE

Come, lecturer on love, resume your rostrum.
Preach to the mad dead roses of the year.
Preach to my heart that's buried in the garden
Under the yellowed petals since you left.
Though deaf by those haranguing winds
The winter plagues dead petals with, and leaves
Long fluttering upon the barren ground or straying
Around the broken stems and shackled thorns,
Your voice by its compelling sweetness will
Spring to winter bring, and numb roots start
Alive to pierce and quick the dark
That closed around with killing cold what heart
I had, after you'd come and left.

My dear, you'll call this fallacy
Pretentious, or some fustian idiocy
To claim my ticking heart was put from me
Into some troped-up garden of old rue.
Forgive, because I set up roses too,
Improbable as madrigals. And chide
My errant language that would claim
I died, or nearly died, for loss of you.
Chide, but believe. I live, but I am dead.
But that's not what I mean. Who lives
Must learn to live his deaths. Who loves
Must learn the same. We blaze and char
As love is near or far
In that small world that's ordered to our want

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But likewise bounded by love's eyes and lips.
The expanded world thus so contracted, what
Fires that come consume us when they're out.
And death's more amorous than not
And just as subtle sudden and chameleon cruel.

So preach to me, and tell me less of death
Than love that outlasts death, as I've heard tell.
Tell me that my heart confined
And sunken low within the flesh's earth
Will, when you come again, awake
And know its Easter in your sight
As may those thwarted roses rise
Some later on to your rare light
Compounded of much heat and spirit.
Tell me that this death's not long.
Be hortatory, admonitory, and calm
In your bright fever, that the clear estate
The world is when you're here will get again
Its lease to be, as you propound
How to our destiny we grow as one
If two, with such split hearts as we own,
Not sanguined by experience, may so dream
An absolution clement as the rain.

✪ JEAN GARRIGUE's fifth book of poems, *Country Without Maps,* will be published next fall by Macmillan.

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History's Changing Image

"With Such Permanence as Time Has"

R. F. ARRAGON

THE METAPHOR OF THE JOURNEY to describe man's life, individual and collective, is as ancient in Western thought as Odysseus. This journey is the concern of history, and the task of history is to examine the material and immaterial luggage known as tradition that embodies and reveals the journey. The initial stimulus of such inquiry may be to seek explanations of how any one of us or our society or mankind as a whole got to be where we are, perhaps with an eye to where we are going; but to trace our journey the historian must discover what we did, what we were like and what happened to us on the way. History examines events and situations on the road, singling them out in the complex movement of time, and making them stop for a moment for us to look at them.

Such a moment has been caught by Picasso in his painting *"La Famille des Saltimbanques,"* the family of acrobats, now in the National Gallery in Washington in the Chester Dale Collection. I have grown very fond of this picture as I have seen it repeatedly over the years, and I have lately been asking myself why I have a special affection for it. If it were here, at least in reproduction, I could more readily introduce it as I see it; but even without it I shall try to explain something of what interests me. I suspect that the inseparables, variously called form and content, or compositional design and subject matter, together with the sentiments that these suggest, interested me from the first and have grown in meaning together. I can now indicate only in a general way such immediately sensuous qualities as the economy and flow of line

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in the figure drawing, the soft blues and rose and red of the garments, and the way in which the repeated, gently undulating, vertical contours of the figures and the pattern of colors of their garments bind them together against the vague horizontals of the landscape. I must say more, however, of the relationships that I see among the figures and between them and the landscape. Five of the acrobats stand together left of center in a group that opens toward the woman seated apart in the lower right-hand corner. Not only is her position isolated, but the direction and reserve of her gaze (out of the picture to the right and downward) relate her neither to her fellows nor to us. Yet the standing group directs our attention to her by the way in which three of them look toward her, an indication that is reinforced by the descending line of the heads, by the placement of the feet and by other details. The formal and psychological focus of the painting is in the woman, but she is indifferent to the family, to the landscape, and to us as observers. The others too seem remote, despite the attitude of the three watching her. The result is to give the group a strange aloofness and impersonality. They do not communicate with one another, and yet they seem to face in common a vague anxiety and a suggestion of restlessness combined with patient watchfulness. They stand and wait with the luggage still on the shoulders of the burly man and the slender boy, wait for the woman to turn, to pick up the pitcher at her side and to rise. For they obviously are on the move, in an indefinite landscape, in which they do not belong, a barren country of light mauve-brown under a blue and white sky. They are everywhere and anywhere, having scarcely stopped for a moment of repose on their journey, we know not whence or whither. They may be everyman and any family. For we are always on the move, never resting long, even in the most unchanging societies; and how often do we really feel at home or at one with the natural world and especially with our fellows? At any rate, this sense of change, of insecurity and isolation seems strong in the modern temper.

I am not through with Picasso, for he has done something else in this painting to accentuate the mobility and uncertainty. He has apparently repainted the right side of the seated woman from

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her hips to the flower-garlanded straw hat in such a way as to echo the figure and to give it an indeterminacy suited to its often fugitive and broken contours. This uncertainty has always troubled me in a vague way, but I have come to accept the troubling and to value it as part of the impact of the painting that belongs integrally with the rest of it. The doubling in the shadowlike echo may be the culminating point of this work of art.

Although I cannot by words call up the picture for our visual imagination, I hope that I have suggested, by metaphor, something of the object of historical inquiry, man's journey, and of the nature of Picasso's interpretation of it—catching man, so to speak, on the move and trying to discover and to portray who he is and what he is doing.

Picasso suggests what historians perennially discover—the restlessness and insecurity of man, the constant change of scene, of luggage, of roles, of actors themselves. Like Picasso's family of acrobats, the historian's *personae*, individual and collective, are in inescapable subjection to change. They will scarcely stay long enough in the same posture for him to describe them. There is no need to argue in the modern world the ubiquity of change, change in economic relations, in means of social control, in moral practices and standards, religious institutions and ideas, and in art and literature. Change is a pervasive feature of the human career and its portrayal in history.

Picasso suggests too that the artist changes, even in painting the same picture. From painting to painting, decade to decade, he has not seen the world in the same way, selected the same objects to represent or used the same forms and techniques. Even more is this true from artist to artist and age to age. Art history is greatly concerned with change. What is true of art and of artists is true of history and historians. History changes and such change becomes an object of study by history itself. To the historian, then, it is no surprise that history is continually rewritten. This rewriting is his function. Change in historical interpretation, even in the facts, is an inevitable consequence of historical inquiry.

Restless curiosity discovers new data and reexamines old data in the light of the new and by revised methods. New generaliza-

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tions from sciences are used and perhaps new symbols from the arts. The interpretation of human behavior has shifted; the importance of events and of causal explanations has changed. Men's interests are different. Change in history is thus occasioned by its own continuing inquiry, by the individual differences among historians and by the general changes in society and culture. The initiative of historians and the changing climate over the years refresh history. Thus did Schliemann and Evans discover at Troy, Mycenae and Knossos what Breasted called the New Past, which has been changing kaleidoscopically ever since. Thus has the scientific and technological innovativeness of the Middle Ages been discovered, the uniqueness and individualism of the Renaissance questioned, the English and American Civil Wars and the American and French Revolutions rewritten and debated again and again. Changes of this sort are encouraged and confirmed in large measure by inquiry and on human initiative. Changes in the climate of opinion are not purely impersonal. Men play an active and responsible part in these, even if they cannot forsee the outcome. For better or worse, historians are not long satisfied with accepted historical accounts.

The reason is clear. The historian's imitation of life, like Picasso's, cannot be a copy. To copy the past not only is impossible but would be useless. Even the musicians and dramatists of chance or randomness have to have means of selection, such as the throwing of dice in the GreenwichVillage version of the *Marrying Maiden*. The literature portraying the stream of consciousness is itself not that stream. Each of us, immersed in the flow of life, makes such sense of it as he can by selection and connection. The historian makes this discovery more systematically with an eye to coherence of the whole. He has material evidence, charters, account books, ploughs and poems. Into and behind these traces of the past he reads what he can. He infers motives and purposes, thoughts and feeling from action and expression. He groups actions and expressions into events as the basic historical facts and links these into combinations by coincidence and causality. To do this, he uses the general ideas, the diagnostic tact, the emotional responses and the imaginative recognition of possible relations that he has accumulated

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from his experience as an historian and as a man. This equipment will include what we often call values (the rating that we emotionally and more or less critically put upon particular qualities of experience) and probably, behind all, a general outlook or at least a set of perspectives.

As an interpretative imitation of human life, an interpretation of the actions of men as individuals and in groups by other men, history is by nature subjective. The result is an interpretation of life that has much in common with art, at least with representational art. Historian and novelist, poet and painter portray particular events and situations from particular points of view, constructing out of their own experience, and that of others, histories, novels, poems and paintings as imagined objects. The subjectivity of these objects as creations or re-creations of human action and attitude is emphasized by the need to get behind the externals to the psychic springs of action and so to interpret men's behavior in the light of feeling and thought. Meaning of the event and the situation is sought in the desires and emotions, the ideas and ideals that comprise the conscious and unconscious intention of the actors. Only thus can the historian, like Aristotle's tragic dramatist, make comprehensible and meaningful what men have done and do by the conformity or nonconformity of their doings with typical and probable behavior. The relations that make sense in the interpretation and portrayal of events and situations are rooted within men. What these are must be discovered by being recognized through men's deeds and words as evidenced in material and symbolic remains, and they must be conveyed in the verbal or pictorial representation of the deeds. You may explain causal connection behavioristically as that of stimulus and response, define causality as custom or category to satisfy Hume and Kant and their successors; nevertheless the connecting links will be internal, the feeling and thinking within the bodies and minds of men.

Psychological insight into the emotion and thought behind appearances is as necessary for realism or naturalism in literature, painting and history as it is for imagism in poetry, surrealism in art and the absurd in the theater. They all are symbolic in a way similar to behavior in the actual situations of life but more

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intensively and designedly, and must be so understood. As readers and observers we can test this for ourselves, for such insight is as essential for us who are only spectators of works of art and of history as it is for the artists and historians who create these. Without it, what would we make of a *Madame Bovary* or a Renoir "*Déjeuner des canotiers*" or a *History of the Peloponnesian War*?

Let us take, for example, Renoir's brilliant painting, which hangs in the Phillips Collection in Washington. The visual impact of this portrayal of a boating party at luncheon on a porch overlooking the Seine is breathtaking and utterly convincing. The sensation of the physical presence of open air and sunlight is immediate, as is that of a crowded porch. We enter it visually from the lower left, our eyes caught by the whiteness of the table linen in the foreground and by the broad and irregular circle of people for whom the table is the focus. The high-keyed colors of their garments (blue, white and yellow with touches of red), the warm flesh-tones, and the bold and vigorous drawing that gives definition and plasticity to the figures make them dominate the canvas. The groups of twos or threes and individual figures hold our attention successively as we move around and across the circle, with our eyes digressing occasionally to the figures crowded to the far end of the porch at the upper right and to the dazzling river and sails seen through the blue-green shrubbery to the left over the diagonal dark rail and under the red-striped awning. The sparkle and blend of colors in this landscape provide an illusionist, characteristically Impressionistic background to the solid structure of the porch and its occupants.

No part of the painting is static, least of all the dominant figures. The emotional impact is as immediate as the physical. Sensation and emotion are integrally related. The *joie de vivre* is in the very light and air, not simply in the suggestion of the title of the painting or of such obvious symbols as holiday clothes, luncheon table with fruit and bottles, and the view of the river. The kaleidoscopic pattern of colors and the interweaving of the contours that contain them are the means of the interaction of men and women who on a summer afternoon after an ample lunch are standing and sitting informally, talking and listening and look-

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ing at one another in relaxed, unconcentrated attention. The effect is dynamic. There is a glow in the contentment, a vitality beneath the relaxation. Many are the elements fused in the luminous, pervasive atmosphere that convey the sensuous emotion of enjoyment, hedonistic and bourgeois, neither animal passion nor spiritual ecstasy, just human pleasure.

How often we meet this integration of sensation and emotion in the works of Renoir and of Bonnard and Matisse! We see it too, colored with irony and pathos, in such masterpieces as Manet's "Bar of the Folies-Bergères," Degas' "Millinery Shop," Toulouse-Lautrec's "At the Moulin de la Galette" and Vuillard's "Visit." Indeed, are any of these scenes as casual as the word "impression" and its supposed indifference to subject matter suggest? Even at their most casual they evoke or express (there is basically no difference in the resulting aesthetic experience), through the physical impression, feelings embodied in and giving vitality to the impression, whether it be of figures, intimate interiors or broad landscapes, or more recently even of nonobjective images.

In history, I choose a quite different case as an example of the importance of emotional insight. Xenophon, the author of the *Hellenica,* the continuation of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War,* had not the genius either of Renoir for the creation of vivid actuality or of Thucydides for the understanding of man and politics. He gives an unimaginative and somewhat moralistic narrative of what happened, not getting much below the surface of events. Yet his history offers at least one dramatic example of the imaginative sensitivity needed by the historian and by his readers. Without it we cannot understand the fatal sequel to the Athenian defeat of the Spartan fleet at Arginusae. This victory marked the recovery of the naval power that Athens had lost in the adventure at Syracuse. Then by condemning to death the victorious generals the popular assembly in effect threw away the victory, for those who replaced the victors soon let the Athenian fleet be destroyed by surprise at Aegospotamos.

In telling of the debate and voting that condemned the generals (in spite of the resistance of Socrates, one of the commission of ten in charge of the assembly), Xenophon outdoes himself. We may

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with him participate in the jealous fears and self-protective hostility of the captains toward the generals after the captains' excusable failure to pick up the men from the disabled ships in the midst of a storm. We sense the unreckoning bitterness of the populace, strained by long war and swayed by demagogues, over the loss of kinsmen at sea without the burial that would have prevented the spirits from wandering homeless and hopeless. To be able to feel with these Athenians (and with Socrates) on that occasion is as important for the historical reconstruction of that event (in reading Xenophon) as to share the feelings of Antigone and Creon is for the imaginative grasp of Sophocles' *Antigone.*

We involve ourselves not simply by reasoned inference from the overt facts of the Athenians' behavior but by an imaginative and emotional grasp of the events. Analysis of the causes of the emotions that prevailed after Arginusae and of their results may heighten participation in the historical drama, but this too requires comprehension of the force of the emotions. The essential stimulus is the sense of fear and horror that pervades our images of the floating wreckage left by the battle and the storm and of the vengeful populace sweeping aside law and reason in the assembly in the lust for sacrificial victims.

The imaginative sharing of this passion and pain is an emotional inference from the evidence, an inference grounded in accumulated experience of motives, passions and satisfactions. The interpreter needs to know something of them firsthand and to have extended and refined this acquaintance by observing them in kindred shapes in others about him and in the past. He needs to have felt in himself fear and anxiety, pride and power, love and sympathy, "the moments of agony" that become "permanent With such permanence as time has," and that are, as T. S. Eliot goes on to say, appreciated better.

> In the agony of others, nearly experienced,
> Involving ourselves, than in our own.
> For our own past is covered by the currents of action,
> But the torment of others remains an experience
> Unqualified, unworn by subsequent attrition.

So in history and in art "Time the destroyer is time the preserver."

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Hence the claim of Cassirer that "art and history are the most powerful instruments of our inquiry into human nature."

Yet the inquiry by history may differ significantly from the inquiry by the arts. History has an object for imitation much more definitely than have literature and the fine arts (except perhaps portrait painting), a specific object or set of objects, a particular succession of past events to which it is supposed to be true. Its *recherche du temps perdu* is of stricter sort than Proust or the naturalistic novelists envisaged. While artists have been endeavoring, without complete success, to release themselves even in literature from the long dominance of the doctrine of imitation, history has remained peculiarly an imitative art. The verisimilitude expected of it is of an exacting sort. The historical criterion is accurate representation of particular portions of the past in material and psychological detail and in patterns of relations that are supposed to be true to fact. Its correspondence with actuality is specific, representing the actuality of events, of situations and of persons. Time is foreshortened, details selected and highlighted, action concentrated, relations simplified, not to alter or to distort the actors and events but to bring them to life and to give them meaning, even the meaning of chance or inevitability or futility, amid the uncompassable multiplicity of the past.

This concrete particularity was the point of Aristotle's distinction between poetry and history. He carried it too far in neglecting the role of the probable and the necessary in the interpretation of history and in thereby disparaging the seriousness, or philosophic wisdom, of history. But in his definition of the concern of the historian as that which happened to a particular man, such as Alcibiades, at a particular time or place, he was indicating the stubborn facts to which the historian (however it may be for the artist) is tied by some sort of correspondence theory of truth.

The historian acts as if there were a transaction between him and particular events, between imitation and actuality, mediated by the evidence. Whatever metaphysical difficulties may be conjured up, I am content, for the moment at least, with this commonsense assumption and practice. Historical inquiry is not a purely introspective process of discovery! But neither is it the establish-

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ment of a history of those events as a firm, enduring representation of them, the same for all men and for all time. The circumstances of the inquiry and discovery make change in the representation inevitable.

What then can be meant by historical truth? The historian's objects of imitation presumably remain unchanged, being in the irretrievable past where nothing now can touch them. But, as a result of their irretrievability, what *we* do or think *does* touch them, or rather touches the imitations of them in the works of historians. History clings to the objective materiality of its evidences, since these point toward the once actual particulars of the past and give the historian assurance that he has objects that are not fantasies. History claims as its touchstone verisimilitude, the likeness to the truth, the correspondence of the imitative interpretations to the "real thing." But the "real things" are the actual particulars of the past which are known only in and through these very interpretations. The historian's events are his own interpretations, shaped by his thought and feeling and hence by his age.

In recognizing this, history turns upon itself and historicizes its own truth as relative and changing. Like Ouroboros, the snake of northern myth, it swallows itself. The historian is himself a member of Picasso's family of acrobats, and he, as does the painter, journeys with them, resting occasionally only for a moment. The corrosive effect of the subjectivity and variability of historical interpretation upon the notion of historical truth can be seen in contemporary historical theory. The crucial and most difficult problem for modern philosophy of history has been to find a way for history out of the relativity of thought and feeling. Truth seems to succumb to circularity, and history to be swallowed up in historicism.

Not only do historians, as the subjective and relativist theories affirm, bend their facts unconsciously and consciously to the advantage of their nation, their party, their moral and social ideals, their personal interests, their aesthetic tastes and value judgments; but the theories encourage them and their public to rely on the pliability and ambiguity of historical verisimilitude. Truth is claimed to have many facets, from which selection can be made ac-

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cording to the criterion of usefulness. The lessons of history are on our side. The triumph of the right has always been hard to tell from the rightfulness of that which triumphs or which we hope will triumph. For the truth would seem more likely to be useful when the useful can be recognized as true.

If the historian takes his stand, however, upon verisimilitude as an essential test of historical inquiry, his decision will be comparable to that of Joyce's Artist as a Young Man when he rejects nation, church and family as nets that entangle the artist as he strives toward his vision of man and the world. The historian's vision of the past can have significance only if it has some proper claim to be a faithful representation of that past. Even intentional distortion and falsification in history subscribe to a definition of history that makes it a search for truth. Their effectiveness depends upon such a definition. On the supposition of truthfulness rests the usefulness of historical deviations from the truth. The same principle applies to the current history called news when falsified by fabrication or by suppression. It must *seem* true. The requirement will hold equally for broad practical uses that have been claimed for history such as explanation of present-day institutions, proof of historical laws, and demonstration of political and moral lessons, and for history that avows no purpose other than the re-creation in the imagination of the writer and reader of what particular men or particular peoples did, how they acted, thought and felt, what they achieved or failed to achieve, a re-creation that may enrich our experience and understanding of men and of societies. This humanistic role, which emphasizes the kinship of history with the imitative arts, demands, like other purposes, a comprehensible representation of what actually happened. The ideal criterion for validity is truth to an actual but strictly speaking irrecoverable past. That there is indeed such a past not to be confused with the present is implied, in fact required, by the very notions of historical relativity and change.

What then may we expect or should we want of history? Provisional not final answers, tentative not absolute truth! These are characteristic of all inquiry as a human enterprise. They are characteristic of all science, of humanistic scholarship, of philosophy,

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and of literary and fine art, as of history. The enterprise is a continuing one, directed always toward fresh discovery through the very testing and elaboration of prior discovery. Although tentative, its results require imaginative vigor and critical rigor. They must be open to public inspection and satisfy the tests set for verification by the tradition of science, scholarship and art, and they must break through the limits set by this tradition to new ideas and new solutions. Novelty and tradition complement each other, giving zest and control to inquiry. It is open-minded, anxious to recognize new methods, new directions, new results, to try out their possibilities; but their claims to validity are not to be accepted lightly nor rejected pedantically. Discoveries, however tentative, will be used, will influence action, will even guide the directions of further discovery, and we must be as sure as we can of them. What is true of the sciences is true of history and of the other humanities. None is closed; they all have their frontiers.

There should be no wonder that I find it hard to set boundaries to such history. It flows over into literature, the fine arts and philosophy, and into geography and other areas—perhaps unwarrantedly, but I like it that way. We are too discipline-bound. Our frontiers are too narrow. Some of the most fruitful inquiries cross disciplinary lines. Certainly man's experience does so and hence the interpretation of that experience in the form of history. All sorts of interests and accidents direct attention from time to time, for example, to Simón Bolívar, liberator of Colombia, to the Byzantine pendentive dome, to Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura,* or to Baroque architecture. The original stimulus may have been a problem of politics, of the social order or of artistic taste, or the reputed disinterestedness of "idle curiosity." Whatever it is that directs Picasso's attention and ours to a family of acrobats, I applaud it. We are directed to men and women and societies on their journey, inexhaustible objects of human interest and vicarious experience. These give content to history and offer that pluralism of values to which history subscribes in its aim at the discovery of man in all his complexity by a fusion of imaginative insight and critical inquiry.

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White, Out of Heaven

MELVILLE CANE

White, out of heaven
Earthward they veer,
Strewn and driven,
They feather the air,
Whirl in the weather,
Hover and cover,
Hold and enfold
A world now lulled,
Deep under the mould.

✪ MELVILLE CANE's seventh collection of poems, *To Build a Fire,* will be published later this year.

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Still Life

EDWARD KESSLER

Seeing it in the French as *nature morte*
One starts to wonder about Cézanne's apples
Sunning themselves by seas of tablecloth,
With pitchers, glasses, household odds-and-ends.
"O Lord, make me worthy of isolation,"
He told himself. But when he wedded light,
And restless forms shifting their shade,
Only the apples in his head kept faith.
And that was knowledge. Even when he bought
Wax fruit to paint, its dissolution proved
Nothing is neuter, that the permanent changes,
And in its going leaves us more alive.
Thus English fails—no life is ever still—
And French obscures the sun's virility.

✪ EDWARD KESSLER teaches English at the College of William and Mary. His poems have appeared in the SCHOLAR as well as in *Poetry, Saturday Review,* the *New Yorker* and the *Virginia Quarterly Review.*

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For the Old Yeats

JAMES SCHEVILL

The great ripping goes on in all minds,
A tearing of structure, a change;
Piercing through our loves, we find new loves,
Bodies alter in tidal lash of blood,
We are lost, we are found, we are alone.
In that loneliness, a stony center begins,
The hardening of age; lechers of time
We cling to a core of name, ancestral,
But skin changes, stiffens, hair whitens.
Who is that foolish, fond, ridiculous, old man?
Many years ago he was young and ran
His leaping, curving course.
Limping, he enters the noose of time,
Dreaming a fancy of love firm to hold,
And hangs there in his old, ludicrous hope
To the bawdy laughter of the world.

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Schools of English and Contemporary Society

RICHARD HOGGART

MY TITLE IS DELIBERATELY NOT VERY PRECISE. I chose it so as to give myself room to talk from several different angles about one kind of activity by schools of English that I think should be developed, and that we hope to develop at Birmingham.

Several elements in the work of the Birmingham school make it easy to see how the approach I propose could be married to the rest. The school has done some work here, as it has in many other areas. In fact, a new member of the department, looking on all that *is* done—the scholarly work, the originality of some of the courses, the body of regular publication—is bound to feel exceptionally shy. If he happens to be a professor and looks down the line of (by now rather faded) photographs of his predecessors in the Department's corridor—and at Professor Spencer, who is not at all faded—he realizes that he is eighth in a line of which the other seven at least have all been unusually distinguished men.

The great consolation is that he is not alone. He is lucky enough to be working in parallel with an energetic, productive and friendly Head of Department; and with a large, vigorous and productive staff. And, as I have discovered in this last term, he receives both from his own department and from outside a great deal of friendship and kindness.

All this makes it easier for him to offer his thoughts on such a large and bold subject as mine, without seeming (he hopes) altogether too brash.

Of course, someone is sure to be thinking: can one *really* say anything worthwhile about schools of English and contemporary society? Doesn't such a title itself suggest a failure to recognize the

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"timeless" nature of the work that should be central to a school of English? Is it perhaps only another indication that someone else has succumbed to the cult of contemporaneity? Won't such an interest distract us from our central, our fundamental, our manifestly *proper* work? Or conversely—if we do our proper work, won't it in fact prove to have a profound relevance to contemporary society, a relevance that will only be made superficial if we try to force the relationship, to effect a shotgun marriage?

I feel the force of all these questions. Much of the work of an English school, of its most important work, has little direct relation to the particular forms and fashions of contemporary society. There must be continuous historical, textual, editorial, bibliographical and literary critical research into a thousand years of linguistic and literary change. Here the schools are repositories of knowledge, and contributors to knowledge of their past. Young scholars have to be trained to take up this advanced work and others trained so that they may go out to teach, and so help ensure that our language and literature shall be better understood and cultivated. Here the schools of English are active transmitters.

One can easily appreciate also that further argument—that, even if schools of English may have a more pervasive relevance to modern society than the last paragraph suggests, they will carry out this function best if they do not bother directly about their contemporary world whilst they are at work, are not fretfully engaged with it. That if they make their students come to grips in as full and varied a way as possible with, say, *The Canterbury Tales* or with *Paradise Lost* or even with *Love's Labour's Lost,* or with medieval England or Renaissance England as literature reveals them, they will in the long run do more for the understanding of modern society than they will achieve by a constant irritable reaching after up-to-the-minute facts and reasons, contemporary saws or modern instances. That the steps toward a loss of perspective and depth, toward the point at which you are satisfied with the shifting glitter of the merely novel and fashionable, are gradual and painless steps, since apologetics are provided—by modern society itself—all along the way. That the real profit of a training in English is a tempering of mind and imagination, a disposition of thought and feeling.

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All this has much truth in it. So although I am going to argue that some time should be given—more than most schools give at present—to the direct study of certain aspects of modern society, I am sure that even this will not be done well unless English schools keep central to their work those elements I have already described as fundamental. I am sure also that those of us who choose to do some work in this particular contemporary area will not do it well unless we constantly refresh ourselves with more traditional work, and constantly remind ourselves that our special occupational risk is the loss of perspective and balance.

So much for admissions and provisos, and now for the approach to my main theme. Those larger profits of a training in English, to which I referred generally a few minutes ago, ought obviously to include the encouragement of these two qualities:

First, a love and respect for *language,* for its complex and active relationship with individual experience and with the life of societies. This is immensely exciting because, although most people do not paint or compose music each day or indeed any day, virtually everybody every day uses words, and uses them not only functionally but emotionally, not just as tools but as ways of expressing his personality. Uses them and misuses them, so that they never remain still or pure (but neither do they set in classic poses). If, as we are often told, music is the purest of the arts, then literature is surely the muddiest, up to its knees in the mud of life. A writer constantly finds that his materials—words—seem like beautiful but willful or weak-willed women who are too easily tempted to go wrong, too easily made into harlots or drabs. But for him, although there may be magic words and sacred words, no words are "naughty" words in themselves. He is forever wanting to pick them up and make honest women of them again, by the overwhelming attention of his love and respect. Sometimes, admittedly, he has to turn away and decide that certain of them are past redemption, in this generation at least.

Second—of those two qualities that a training in English ought to encourage, and that especially concern me now—whatever else it does, this training should obviously bring an increased ability to appreciate the many ways in which the literary imagination ex-

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plores human experience, ways that range from the most directly literal and moralistic to the apparently quite oblique or irrelevant.

Most of what I shall be saying in this lecture rises from an interest in the moral and social concerns of literature, that is plain. So, before I go any further, let me diverge for a minute to say that I do not think I undervalue what Auden called the "play" or "game" element in literature (in all the arts). I am anxious not to seem to ignore the aesthetic "side" of literature, that side which (as we have recently been reminded) criticism has tended to neglect during the last thirty or forty years, its "gratuitous" and even, in a certain sense, "meaningless" elements.

A work of literature may enjoy a formality beyond and irrelevant to the needs of meaning and of the ordering of experience. A sonnet is not only an exploration and patterning of significant experience; it is also a playful pattern, made for its own sake and enjoyed by us for its own sake. And some of the deepest meanings of literature may come in the most indirect ways—through the odd, the fantastic, the grotesque.

I think that in Britain we tend to be uneasy about such elements—especially about the fantastic in technique and the apocalyptic vision—although in fact these elements run right through our literature. Jacobean drama is only the most immediately striking instance. When we discuss the novel, in particular, we tend to speak very often about our skill in narrative or our close moral explorations—even though this may cause us to *under*read Richardson, to ignore Sterne, to put Emily Brontë in an aberrant corner, and to leave Lewis Carroll to the children and the psychologists. So today we talk chiefly about, for instance, Angus Wilson's skill as a social satirist whereas he is at bottom, I think, a novelist of horror, horror at cruelty and perhaps at final meaninglessness. More often than we seem to wish to recognize, English writers see the skull beneath the skin, and can only express their vision by moving outside the commoner conventions.

That was my digression. My main argument today certainly *has* to do with literature and "meaning." Auden called literature not only a "game"—so as to recall its "play" or "purely aesthetic" elements—but "a game of knowledge." Literature has to do with "knowledge," with our grasp of our experience, with what E. M.

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Forster calls "the life by values." It starts in an absorbed attention to the "thisness" of experience, in an immersion in "the destructive element," in "the foul rag and bone shop of the heart." It, first, *celebrates* all this—"blesses . . . what there is for being." It works not by precept and abstraction but by dramatization, by "showing forth," by creating the "felt sense of life" in its complicated fullness—of sense and feeling and thought, of time and place and persons. In ordering its dramas it is driven by a desire to find Theseus' thread, the moment of epiphany, the revelatory instance, the tiny gesture that opens a whole field of meaning and consequence. It does not do this "playfully"—it really *is* concerned with meanings here; but it does not do this so as to reform, either; it does so, I think, first for the extraordinary momentary peace of knowing that a little more of the shifting amorphousness of experience has been named and held, that we are now that bit less shaken by the anarchy of feeling and the barbarous assault of experience, that we are that much less likely (to combine two quotations) to be blown about the pendant world, in fractured atoms.

But to push for this kind of truth, no matter how much it may hurt, is a kind of moral activity. I am glad to quote Jung (rather than a literary critic) on the work of a poet:

> [He] forces the reader to greater clarity and depth of human insight by bringing fully into his consciousness what he ordinarily evades or overlooks or senses only with a feeling of dull discomfort.

I do not believe that reading good books necessarily makes us behave better—that to appreciate Jane Austen's *Emma* is to ensure that we too will henceforth act with greater self-knowledge. I hope to look further at the relations between literature and morals at another time. For the moment I want only to ask this: how well would we be able imaginatively to apprehend, let alone articulate the complexity of, for example, personal relations, if it were not for literature *working as literature*? I do not mean that we all need to have read the best books; but what has the fact that they have been read and that their insights and something of their fullness have, by the subtle and ramified processes of mediation, passed into the general consciousness, what has that contributed to the richness and flexibility of our understanding of our own experience? What would have been lost without, for example, *Emma,* again, or

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Anna Karenina, or *Madame Bovary*—or, preeminently, *Lear?*

Literature, then, has to do with "knowledge," with meanings. It is not *primarily* analytic or discursive, or it would be something else, something valuable perhaps (say, philosophy), but not *art.* Only here in art is life embodied, re-created, in all its dimensions —so that a particular moral choice is bound up with this time and that place, with that other person and those habits. Only here do we, at one and the same time, see ourselves densely and vulnerably; and also as creatures who think and dream outside the time-ridden texture of daily experience. This is, to borrow a nice phrase to describe the fusion, "the real world of theology and horses."

I am blowing a trumpet for my subject, of course, and am quite ready to do so, just a little. I do not, though, want to do it aggressively. For I think that some Arts teachers are rather nervously unsure of their own justification today, and too sensitively adopt defensive positions in relation to their scientific and technological colleagues. They have no need to do so, as the scientists will often tell them. Still, it is easy—especially in a large modern university which is therefore bound to be expanding very rapidly on its scientific and technological sides—for arts people to slip into feeling second-class citizens, the small and comparatively still area of traditional humanistic studies which is permitted, so that there shall be no doubt that this is after all a university and not merely a school of instruction; but which few people regard as having much relationship with the serious business of living today, with modern organizations and pressures and plannings.

It is plain by now that *I* think English studies of great importance for life at any time. But I shall not directly assert this again, particularly because in schools of English we tend, I think, to go around saying there's nothing like leather, that the English school should be the center, the core, and so on. We are right, of course; but it is harder to live up to our own professions than some of us seem to realize. We assert the case for the profound importance of great literature, and tend to assume that we have thereby made out the case for the profound importance of schools of English. But that is to assume that our practice as teachers lives up to the quality and challenge of the raw material we work with. I do not think it always does.

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An increased respect for the life of language, and for the unpremeditated textures of experience: these, I have said, are two qualities a training in English ought to encourage at any time. How do these qualities fare in contemporary society? And in what ways might a literary person concern himself with them today?

Years ago Ezra Pound delivered himself of a splendid blast which will make a good introduction here:

> Has literature a function in the state, in the aggregate of humans? It has . . . it has to do with the clarity of "any and every" thought and opinion. It has to do with maintaining the very cleanliness of the tools, the health of the very matter of thought itself. Save the rare and very limited instances of invention in the plastic arts, or in mathematics, the individual cannot think or communicate his thought, the governor or legislator cannot act effectively or frame his laws, without words, and the solidity and validity of these words is in the care of the damned and despised literati. When their work goes rotten . . . by that I do not mean when they express indecorous thoughts . . . but when their very medium, the very essence of their work, the application of word to thing, goes rotten i.e. becomes slushy and inexact, or excessive or bloated, the whole machinery of social and of individual thought and order goes to pot.

Is language neglected and despised today? Hardly. I remember a B.B.C. current affairs producer, who had spent years in interviewing, reporting, "topicality" seeking and—as they call it—"vox pop'ing," saying: "We've talked enough about 'the affluent society,' 'the meritocratic society' and the rest. I propose 'the articulate society,' the society in which everyone is ready to, feels they ought to speak at the drop of a hat about anything. They're often talking nonsense—intellectual and emotional nonsense—*but they do it in whole sentences,* and with a vocabulary that would have startled their grandfathers." He was dazed with too much of one kind of undigested reality, but it was easy to see his point. If language *is* decaying today, it is decaying not from neglect but from a surfeit of bruising and insensitive attentions.

It has today the status of a magical patent medicine which, properly handled, will do anything for you, from cleaning your teeth to tuning-up your spiritual life. If I wanted to make a fortune quickly I would resign my new chair and found the Hoggart Institute of Communication Practice, running courses at £60—no,

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60 guineas—a week. This is the age of communication. Never before have so many words been used on so many people (through, one might add, so few different channels; but that is a different story). The "Use of English" is one of today's proliferating trades and any English school could easily become a prosperous servicing center and lubrication shop. It could within a year or two treble its size by setting up peripheral agencies—some of them sensible and useful, some of them simply dangerous—from courses in English for foreign students, courses in English for science students or technical students, or for apprentices or for executives, to courses in "the prose of persuasion" for advertising men or for public relations men or for politicians. Every one of such offers has to be scrutinized carefully for its likely effect on the schools' main concerns—and some accepted, some handled with long spoons, some rejected.

We talk about "commercial artists" and know fairly precisely what we mean. We have no equivalent phrase for their counterparts in writing and speech, and this is a pity. "Commercial writer" on a visiting card would be a good deal less "slushy, inexact, excessive and bloated" (to recall Ezra Pound's categories) than "creative copywriter." I wonder whether in any previous period so many words were being used, as we might say, *inorganically*—not because the writers had something to say about their experience, *but on behalf of the particular concerns of others*; when so much language was used not as exploration but as persuasion and manipulation; when so much prose had its eye only slightly on the object and almost wholly on the audience, when so many words proclaimed, if you listened to them carefully within their contexts, not "I touch and illuminate the experience" but "this will roll them in the aisles."

More important: in such circumstances it becomes more difficult to write *decently* about any thoughts and feelings. It would be very easy to compile a black list of words that are now unusable until they have been redefined by each writer within each particular context. Not the old words we are all used to laughing about—"tragedy" for the popular press, or "magnificent" for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. The process goes on quickly and becomes more sophisticated all the time. The newer men have quieter voices. So

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words like "sincere," "creative," "vital," "homely" and "love" go out of decent use. Try writing an obituary notice for a respected old man, or a speech in honor of a quiet decent life:

> All words like peace and love,
> All sane affirmative speech,
> Had been soiled, profaned, debased
> To a horrid mechanical screech:
> No civil style survived
> That pandemonium
> But the wry, the sotto-voce,
> Ironic and monochrome.

That is why, we say, a writer finds his tools going blunt in his hands. Yet that image is too mechanical. The process proliferates and works at many levels, and at each level the language can *seem* alive; see, for instance, the high nervous pseudo-life of some magazine stories. And yet it has been so "processed" (a favorite word of mine, to which I'll return) that all the snags and roughnesses of real response have been smoothed away. Auden, whom I quoted a moment ago, speaks also of words heard only "now and then/On lips of living men." It becomes, as I said, harder to feel true and think straight.

Even more: much writing today does not address itself to the experience of whole men, or to men as opaque creatures. It addresses us fragmentarily, as parts of men, since on those parts (for one reason or another, some merely innocuous, some exploitative) pressure has to be brought to bear. So we are addressed as bits, but as bits in large lopsided blocks—as citizens, as consumers, as middle-aged middle-class parents of one and a half children, as voters or viewers, as religiously inclined car owners, as typical teenagers or commuting redbrick professors.

I am sorry when any of my students go into advertising. But I recognize that it is altogether too easy to blame the advertisers and the public relations men for all this development. They are merely among its more egregious manifestations. This is part of a much larger problem, part of the price of extreme self-consciousness (up to a certain point and of a certain kind); and of the endlessly working, sausage-machine productiveness of modern communications of all kinds; and of the increasing centralization and concentration

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of societies. The governments are under this pressure as much as the advertisers are—to influence us through words, for limited but urgent purposes.

But a way of using language toward people is a way of seeing people, of making assumptions about them. If we use *these* words, *these* tones, rather than *those*, we are seeing them as this kind of people rather than that. This goes much further than seeing them as, for instance, limited in vocabulary or background (which may be a proper aid to speaking to them); at bottom it goes into the sort of respect we have for them as human beings. In short, changes in contemporary English—Government prose, *Daily Mirror* prose, *Observer* prose, the changing prose of social occasions, of public occasions or of love-making—all these are not narrowly linguistic matters but can only be understood socially, psychologically, morally.

Schools of English, because they are concerned with the life of language and with truth to imaginative experience, should obviously be especially aware of all this and of its ramifications. So indeed should *any* teachers within the humanities—and perhaps all teachers—more aware than most seem to be. As it is, too many of us in schools of English stay most of the time within our fairly enclosed areas, but fall immediately and uncritically to invitations from outside. We do not with sufficient confidence separate ourselves from or sufficiently *critically* engage with that outer world, the world of telegrams and bonhomie.

By insisting all the time on the snaggy but *responsible* life of language, and on the unevadable "thisness" of experience, and on the opacity of human beings, we should in schools of English form part of the awkward squad that is needed to resist the formation of the unreal, unfelt, bland, depersonalized society.

Yet we should not feel like dogs in the manger, or like sour Bourbons about all these changes. There is a great deal to be cheerful about—that so many *have* had the chance to become articulate; that self-consciousness may lead to self-awareness, and both are better than a dull illiteracy; that to be battered by various kinds of verbal persuasion indicates at least that many people have a degree of freedom to choose.

I have already said that I do not much like one reaction to cur-

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rent pressures in schools of English; that is, to become briskly and cheerfully executive and build a sort of Corporation . . . sprouting this institute or that center, for this or that presumed dynamic need, some of which are not only marginal but are also distracting to our real work.

Still—each year groups of graduates, presumably with a sound and sensitive training in English language and literature, leave our universities, ready and indeed anxious to communicate their rich heritage in the schools. They soon find that the voices that most readily and excitingly speak to the hearts of their schoolchildren are very different from the voices heard in that high art that they are now trained to teach. Jane Austen does not speak with the accents of *Honey*, and *Honey* is much read even in girls' grammar schools. "Only connect"; how many teachers even begin to make intellectual or emotional sense of this split, although many of them avidly listened to those other voices before they came to university and some might still do so sometimes, with some part of themselves. In my experience few resolve the contradictions. In asserting their truths they rarely have the confidence of the communicators on the other side of the gulf. They are often confused and baffled; they despise without understanding and feel sometimes like keepers in the museum of high but irrelevant art, training a few in the next generation to be keepers in their turn.

It would surely be better if more of us *were* more informed, if we sought more relevance and connection, if we encouraged a stronger sense that the life of the imagination is always to be fought for, and that today—when we consume whole areas of artistic possibilities as though we were feverishly working-out an automated mine, when we subject language to the most sophisticated misuse —today especially we need to encourage the making of these connections. We need, as part of a training in English, to encourage a more direct engagement. Some secondary schools already attempt this; they do not get much help from within university English departments.

Listen, before I enumerate some work we might risk doing, to this voice, to this *kind* of voice:

We live in the realm of the *half* educated. The number of readers grows daily, but the quality of readers does not improve rapidly. The middle

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class is scattered, headless; it is well-meaning but aimless; wishing to be wise, but ignorant how to be wise. The aristocracy of England never was a literary aristocracy, never even in the days of its full power—of its unquestioned predominance did it guide—did it even seriously try to guide—the taste of England. Without guidance young men, and tired men are thrown amongst a mass of books; they have to choose which they like; many of them would much like to improve their culture, to chasten their taste, if they knew how. But left to themselves they take, not pure art, but showy art; not that which permanently relieves the eye and makes it happy whenever it looks, and as long as it looks, but *glaring* art which catches and arrests the eye for a moment, but which in the end fatigues it. But before the wholesome remedy of nature—the fatigue arrives—the hasty reader has passed on to some new excitement, which in its turn stimulates for an instant, and then is passed by forever. These conditions are not favorable to the due appreciation of pure art—of that art which must be known before it is admired—which must have fastened irrevocably on the brain before you appreciate it—which you must love ere it will seem worthy of your love.

That long paragraph occurs in, of all places, a critical essay on the poetry of Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning. I do not agree with all its formulations but I admire its almost cheeky sweep, its boldness in tackling interconnections between history, politics, the aesthetics of popular taste. I would like that kind of voice to be heard more often in schools of English. But I suspect that some people there, if a colleague were to produce such a paragraph in the middle of an otherwise straightforward critical essay, would advise him to delete it—on the grounds that it wasn't sufficiently specialist and scholarly and might well make people wonder whether "old B was becoming 'journalistic,'" and might even affect his chances of promotion. Actually the passage is about a hundred years old, and is by Bagehot.

If we want to give a name to this approach we may provisionally call it Literature and Contemporary Cultural Studies. Obviously it has something in common with several existing approaches, with "Literature, Life and Thought," say, or with "Literature and the History of Ideas"; but it is not exactly any one of them. Professor Seymour Betsky of Montana has a scheme that he calls "Literature and General Culture" and that is in some respects quite

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near to our approach; but there are important differences of stress and area. And clearly much of the particular stress I propose has many ancestors. I cannot name them all, but Dr. Leavis in his culture and environment work and Mrs. Leavis in her studies in popular fiction are plainly more important than most others.

The field for possible work can perhaps be divided into three: one is, roughly, historical and philosophical; another is, again roughly, sociological; the third—which will be the most important for us—is the literary critical.

We need to know more about the *history* of what is called "the cultural debate." Recently Raymond Williams did some very interesting work in the line from Burke to Orwell, and got both praise and punishment for his labors from others in specialist fields which he had been bound to encroach on. Perhaps some of those others will now make their contributions.

Probably even harder: we need to *define the terms* of the debate more closely. At the moment they are muddled and inadequate. More even than is usual in debate, numerous semantic shifts hide a confusion of assumptions. The hollow clash of ill-conceived and undernourished generalizations and of submerged but warring apologetics makes do for what should be a real dialogue.

Thus, talk about "highbrows, middlebrows and lowbrows" continues, although it is now almost entirely useless and disabling as a critical tool. Again, the educational press (following Ortega y Gasset, but a long way behind) still talks about "your common man" and "the masses" *as though these were well-defined terms* rather than cries in the dark. Most of the discussion of conformity, status, class, "Americanization," mass art, pop art, folk art, urban art and the rest is simply too thin.

Chapter 3 of the *Pilkington Report on Broadcasting* is called "The Purposes of Broadcasting" and, among other things, tries to resolve that apparent conflict (for years a *pons asinorum* in discussion about mass communications) between "giving the people what they want" and "giving the people what they ought to have." I think the section well argued, as do some other people. A few objected to it, of course, as though a "good root-confusion" had been taken away from them, leaving them like an illusionist without a cloak to wave. But my point here is a simple one: it seems

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strange that we had to wait so long for so straightforward a piece of analysis, and then to find it in a government report.

Or consider the language of the debate on advertising, which is now very active. The most intelligent and seriously received of the apologists are so high-minded that it is almost painful to read them—high-minded but semantically barbarous.

Or think of the easy way in which the organs of opinion create new little cultural patterns; for instance, the "Angry Young Man" movement or the "U and non-U" controversy. About these the most important thing to say is that their promotion almost wholly lacked precision or historical perspective.

You need almost to define each word before you use it, if you are not to be misunderstood. In the *Pilkington Report*, to come back to that, we said that broadcasting is in an active relationship with the moral condition of society. The use of the word "moral" there (that whole sentence) belongs to the normal vocabulary of discussion about cultural matters. It meant roughly that the texture, the quality of the life, of a society—its habits and ways of life as expressions of assumptions and values—will be reflected and to some extent affected by broadcasting (as by other forms of mass communication). We expected that a few people would think we meant that broadcasting had a direct responsibility for propagating the Ten Commandments. But we thought that the vocabulary of this kind of discussion was sufficiently well known for our sentence not to confuse intelligent people, whichever side of the argument they were on. We were wrong. The *Times* leader writer was only the most surprising of those who confused a "relationship with the moral condition of society" with a duty to promulgate ethical precepts; and he led a fairly large illiterate chorus of respected organs of opinion.

In sum, we have as yet hardly begun to get our terms straight, partly because to do so will require us to reconsider a lot of comforting assumptions. For myself, I wish some philosophers would come into this field; but if they will not, then literary people will have to do what they can, so as to clear the undergrowth for their more strictly literary explorations.

The second area of work I called, roughly, literary-sociological.

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Some students of sociology are now going into the field, just as some students of literature have done in the last few years, for example, Professor Altick in the U.S.A., Miss Dalziel in New Zealand and Mr. Louis James here. Sociologists have many other areas to work in, and we cannot expect more than a few of them to share our specific interests. We ought therefore to expect to do most of this work within our own departments, with suitable academic safeguards. We do need more varied work here, especially because much of the sociological work has been done for market research purposes and inevitably tends to choose narrowly, that is, from parts of the field that are likely to be useful to the market (for example, some of the valuable work of Dr. Mark Abrams).

In enumerating questions to which answers would be particularly interesting I will concentrate on problems within this century.

A. *About writers and artists:* Where do they come from? How do they become what they are? What are the shapes and sizes of their financial rewards? (One can, of course, make historical comparisons at any point.)

B. *What are the audiences* for different forms (novel, autobiography, poetry); and what the audiences for different *levels* of approach? What expectations do they have, and what equipment do they bring? One remembers here, for example, the late Joseph Trenaman's valuable research into the responses of the audiences for broadcasting. Again, is there such a thing as "the common reader," "the intelligent layman," "the saving remnant" today? What are the conformations of a line running from Jude the Obscure to Kipps and Mr. Polly to Koestler's anxious corporals to the readers of egghead paperbacks?

C. What of *the opinion formers and their channels of influence?* . . . the guardians, the elite, the clerisy (if there is such a thing today)? Where do they come from? Who, if anyone, has succeeded the Stephens and the Garnetts? We realize how much *could* be done here when we realize how exceptional is such a book as Noel Annan's brilliant *Leslie Stephen, His Life and Times.*

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D. My fourth subdivision within this literary-sociological area has to do with the *organizations for the production and distribution of the written and spoken word,* with their natures, financial and otherwise. Is it true, and if so what does it mean in practical terms (whatever it may mean in imaginative terms), to say that the written word (and perhaps all the arts) are progressively becoming commodities, to be used and quickly discarded? What, to take a small but particular instance, are the commercial facts, what the pattern and what the significance of "the paperback revolution"?

What of the rise of reputations? How far are *they* the creation of commercial forces, which seek concentration and rationalization here just as much as in motor car production, and so tend to give excessive attention to a few and almost wholly to ignore other people?

E. Last, of these subdivisions, how little we know about *all sorts of interrelations*: about interrelations between writers and their audiences, about shared assumptions (cultural, social and moral); about interrelations between writers and organs of opinion, between writers and politics and power, class and cash; about interrelations between the sophisticated and the popular arts, functional and imaginative—in producers, forms and manners. How few foreign comparisons we have made; and so on and so on and so on.

In spite of all my disclaimers someone is bound to be thinking that all this is a long way from literary studies and literary criticism. The charge would not frighten me. Most subject-categories are categories of convenience and some of the best growing points occur where there is a friction between two disciplines, since from that friction a new subject is sometimes born.

But, as I said earlier, the literary critical approach is the most interesting to me and is certainly much neglected; it comes into its own now, in my third area for work. In fact, I think it is essential to understanding within the whole field because, unless you know how these things *work as art,* even though perhaps as bad art, what you say about them will not cut very deep.

We particularly need a better dialogue with sociologists here. It is difficult, without launching into an illustrative seminar, to

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use our critical vocabulary at all—to talk about "the quality of the imagination" shown or about "processing," or to discuss the effect on writing of various pressures; for instance, to talk about corner-cutting techniques that suggest an evasion, or about linguistic tricks, or even (perhaps especially) about what tone tells us. All this needs to be spelled out more, to be illustrated and enforced, at all levels (not just in relation to mass or popular arts).

But I would like chiefly to name here some of the mass or popular arts about which we know too little and in which, I insist, there is room for respectable critical practice: Film criticism (who is as good here as Agee or Warshow in the U.S.A.?); television and sound radio criticism; television drama (which tends to be grandly ignored or grossly overrated); popular fiction of many kinds—crime, westerns, romance, science fiction, the academic and academic's detective story (Orwell did a little interesting work here and Mr. Bernard Bergonzi recently published a good essay on Ian Fleming); the press and journals of all kinds; strip cartoons; the language of advertising and of public relations; popular songs and popular music in all their forms.

Some people will say that they certainly don't *want* to know more about any of this, and that they hardly think they need to know more. They know enough. It is all dreary tinsel, beneath serious critical consideration. The same people will often make generalizations about mass art so sweepingly uninformed as to be intellectually discreditable. Or a few will make a handsome exception for the *News of the World* or "Z Cars."

If only for a start, a little more humility about what audiences actually take from the most unpromising material might not be out of place. I was glad to see just this point hinted at by—surprisingly, to me—C. S. Lewis in his recent book, *An Experiment in Criticism*. A right balance is delicate here. Perhaps no one should engage in the work who is not, in a certain sense, himself *in love* with the material (I think of some interesting Americans here, such as DeMott). I deliberately said "in love in a certain sense" because the love must not be a disguised nostalgia for mud. An assimilated lowbrowism is as bad as an ignorant highbrowism. But anyone with a good critical training should be able to hold

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his balance. After all, he has his touchstones in high art. That being taken care of, he can learn a lot.

Who can listen to a program of pop songs, or watch "Candid Camera" or "This Is Your Life," without enduring a complicated and complex mixture of attraction and repulsion, of admiration for skill and scorn for the phony, or wry observations of similarities and correspondences, of sudden reminders of the raciness of speech, or of the capacity for courage or humor, or of shock at the way mass art can "process" anything, even our most intimate feelings.

All this is deeply related also to hopes, uncertainties, aspirations, the search for identity in a moving society, innocence, meanness, the wish for community and the recognition—far down—of an inescapable loneliness. It is a form of art (bastard art if you want to call it that) but vulnerable, mythic and not easily explained away.

Of course, it is being increasingly machine-tooled, automated, today; we have the thirteen-week sociological soap operas with a crisis at every natural break; the predigested tales for the women's magazines, the extraordinary sophistication of today's westerns; the immensely depressing womanized sophistication of such a thing as the "Lucy" show on television; the offbeat or double take commercials, and so on. And "Compact" is almost unrelievedly processed and culturally agoraphobic. But even there, there are silences —spaces between the brittle voices in which some gesture sets you thinking again about human experience and the use of myth.

We cannot, then, speak of the *effects* of all this as confidently as some social psychologists do, *unless we have a close sense of its imaginative working*; we have to recognize the meaningfulness of much popular art. If we do, we shall certainly not be left with that "passion of awe" which a poet says we may find in the best works of art. Nor shall we be left only with contempt. We may more often be ironic rather than contemptuous; and we may well have *moments* of awe.

As I have said, we are hoping to start in the English department some specific work in the field I have outlined. I say "we" because it is a cooperative operation. We do not intend to set up

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from scratch a large Center, but will work empirically, as money is forthcoming. There is no shortage of subjects, it is plain; and I do not think it will be difficult to find a few well-qualified young men and women willing to spend a year or two on a substantial piece of work in this comparatively new field. We already have one promise of some material help from outside. For more than one reason Birmingham is a suitable place to branch out in this way and at this time. The department, as I have also said, is already solidly established in the main areas of responsibility of a school of English. It has already hived off a fine center for Renaissance studies in the Shakespeare Institute. A movement into contemporary cultural studies would be a natural and balancing extension. There would be special relevance in the appearance at Birmingham of a branch of English studies that had taken a more than usually close look at the imaginative life of urban and centralized societies, in which the school of English had—more than at most other places—thought about the way in which it might properly and relevantly provide a critique of such a society.

But to go into the details of all this now would cost me the perspective I have wanted to keep throughout this lecture. I will end by repeating two of my early and cardinal points. First, I *have* admitted the danger of too contemporary a slant in English studies, of too social a slant and even of too moral a slant. If we forget the "celebratory" or "playful" element in literature we will sooner or later stop talking about literature at all and find ourselves talking instead about history or sociology or philosophy—and probably about bad history and bad sociology and bad philosophy.

But once that truth has been admitted I must repeat that I believe it is easy for departments of English to use it as a sort of excuse. English, once again and finally, has to do with *language exploring human experience, in all its complexity and flux.* It is therefore always in an active relation with its age; and some students of literature—some more students of literature than at present—ought to try to understand these relationships better.

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the way it is

In February

WALTER TELLER

The American Dream—whatever pursuit or promise those words have been masking, one thing is certain; for many the Dream comes to pass. You can see it happening. Although men still go wrong, fail, suffer and die, the legendary American Dream is becoming the new reality. Sovereign citizens revel in it. They are deep, some of them very deep, in all manner of material satisfactions.

For years a chicken hatchery stood at a corner in Buckingham Township, Bucks County. Not long ago, however, from cold incubators and extinct middens, a complex of shops arose, shops designed not for retailing chickens and eggs, or anything else in that line, but only the little luxuries, the beguilers of addicts to Things. These hand-dipped and neo-homespun emporiums sell whatever an acquisitive traffic will bear. They represent, of course, a concept of culture. Born too late to be colonial, yet uncommitted to the modern, what shall one call this particular passionless preference? Coloneum? (I accent the second syllable.) Is coloneum the American style that combines the genteel with the genuine, links the practical with the familiar, ties colonial hardware (reproductions, you know) to twentieth-century linoleum? Like similar manifestations elsewhere, this one enjoys a quaint, stilted name. Whenever I hear it, I feel an urge to slide into the car and drive to a less cultured place. But not at night. At night, lighted up in a way that colonial stockaded enclaves were not, the shopping complex looks cheerful. On cold winter nights it twinkles. Brightly lighted, coloneum shops look warm and inviting, but then at night any light looks good to the person who is an outsider.

February and Tuesday. Tuesdays, the first chair, the one in the window, cuts hair by appointment only—at the Bridge Street Barber Shop, that is. I am due at three. The hour and I arrive together. With courtly gesture, my barber leads the way to the chair. As he tucks me in I notice a change. He seems to be clipping along all alone; the second chair from the window stands unattended. "Where is the worthy Hinkle?" I ask in a neutral tone. My barber narrows his eyes, gazes into the cabinet where, in serried rank, shears bathe in infrared light. Thoughtfully he begins the tonsure and, in his own time, answers. "At home, I shouldn't wonder." "Sick?" "Not exactly." Lifting only my eyes, I see his reflection on the mirrored wall. He critically eyes my bowed head. Then, "You know what Friday was like," he begins again. "I generally walk home after work but Friday, when evening came, Hinkle said he would drive me. It didn't hardly look safe to walk." My barber adjusts the cant of my head. "We left the shop together at six," he continues. "Hinkle was parked on Coryell Street so we started on down that way. About halfway down he calls out, 'Look out for the ice!' I saw the pavement was smooth as a smelt so I stepped out into the street. 'Better walking out here,' I hollered, but by the time I spoke he was down. Broke his arm." "His cutting arm?" I asked without moving

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head or face. "Yep. Just above the wrist." My barber is Pennsylvania German or, to speak erroneously, Pennsylvania Dutch. I know he knows that hinkle means chicken. I barely manage not to remark on the fact even though I detest puns on proper names.

So Mr. Hinkle has the Februarys. Just the same, it's a beautiful month. The light these lengthening afternoons is pink-soft and tipped with spring. Come, it beckons. From the home space in Buckingham Township I turn my wheels eastward, run down the long slope to Center Bridge, then round onto the River Road. Although the light overhead is spring-beauty pink, the trees remain gray, and glittering gray is the tree-bordered Delaware River.

From Center Bridge I drive north on the River Road, making my way in the lee of high rocky bluffs. At this time of year cascades of ice lie plastered in shining impasto against the high backdrop of stone. Nature looks stagy and makeshift, like a scene in a large wax museum except that the wax has spilled over. Water flowing out of the rock has spread onto the road and frozen.

Remembering Hinkle I pay attention. Driving on ice, I remind myself, is a matter of maintaining maximum possible adhesion and this will vary from slight to exceedingly slight. A chicken-light foot on the gas is essential. Accelerate very gently. Reduce the torque to a minimum; I scarcely breathe the command. So I pass by the old Kemble Quarry, the once Hard Times Tavern renamed and affluent now, and perpendicular cliffs decked with cold-shrunken laurel. Ferns droop from seams in the rock or lie faded and limp on the ledges. Although the afternoon light is rose lake, the air is still pretty sharp. Only the tufty mosses look vital, yet when I pull to the side of the road, get out of the car and go to a patch to stroke it, I find it crystalline cold, very brittle and crunchy. I sometimes think I should leave the home place and go and live in the lee of the bluffs by the river. But the trouble with living beside the river is that you never can feel the sun on your back—or know when the water will rise.

At Lumberville, three miles above Center Bridge, by Lock Number 12 in the series of twenty-three lift locks that distinguish the Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania Canal, and by one of the aqueducts that convey it over small streams, I park the car and climb out. A wood bridge takes me across the canal to the towpath where I get into stride. Was anything ever better designed than a towpath for man or mule walking? Heading south, navigating on foot, I am bound for the birthplace of M. J. Heade, the painter of coastlines and marshy meadows. Not long ago he was all but forgotten. Today, however, art collectors, and especially those whose collections aim to survey the range of native production, are buying him in for four and five thousand dollars a landscape. I have been to Boston, to the Museum of Fine Arts, to see the collection titled *American Paintings 1815-1865* wherein Heade stars in a galaxy of longer established names. I have seen his paintings. Now I wish to see, insofar as I can, what he saw.

Martin Johnson Heade was born 11 August 1819, in Lumberville by the river. Scion of English emigrants who came to Bucks County in the eighteenth century, he was the oldest child of Joseph Cowell and Sarah (Johnson) Heed. Johnson Heed, as Martin Heade then was called, attended the local school. The schoolhouse, an eight-sided building known as the Old Eight Square, stood near the intersection of the present River and Green Hill Roads, a half mile downstream from where he lived. Anyone walking the towpath today follows a route the schoolboy must often have taken. The Lumberville stretch of canal and towpath were built on the bed of the old river road and the job, completed in 1830, came by young Johnson Heed's door. His home, or rather, his father's, a plastered stone house still standing erect and now rather more than restored, faces a piece of the Delaware River marked by bold hills and cliffs. It presents a facade a child might have drawn: four openings on the first floor, that is, a door and three win-

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dows; four windows on the second. Behind and above it, the new, the present-day River Road passes. Above the road a wooded slope rises whose rounded back still retains its bristle of trees.

Opposite lies the lower end of Bulls Island, a disheveled landscape covered with trash of the floods, and uninhabited now as it must have been then. Walking in February, in leafless time, you see the same coastline Johnson Heed saw. Walking downstream, to about where the Old Eight Square stood, you round a broad sweep and come to a place where the river all at once widens. The river seems to be opening a mouth to the sea, yet the sea is a hundred miles farther. You ask yourself, what lies beyond this reach? And beyond the point that marks the most distant bounds, what? A river coursing through limited views can make a man footloose and restless. Looking downriver from Lumberville could make an imaginative boy want to travel.

Childhood scene and environment seem to have favored the painter and such, of course, has been the usual case with persons who do the creative thing. Johnson Heed's father, successful in farming and business, encouraged the boy to follow his own bent of mind. Since painting and drawing were what he wanted, his father sent him while in his teens to Newtown, twenty miles down the county, to study with Thomas Hicks. Thomas Hicks, a precocious fourteen-year-old, was a cousin of Edward Hicks, the Quaker primitive painter of "Peaceable Kingdoms." In time, the younger Hicks became a National Academician and typical nineteenth-century portrait painter. Under his tutelage, Johnson Heed began his career by painting portraits.

After perhaps a year of training with Hicks, Johnson Heed, backed by his parents, decided to study abroad. He knew he had a tradition to learn as well as a trade. One must remember that photographs of famous paintings were not made and published until late in the nineteenth century. Until then, the only reproductions were either copies in oil, or engravings. In Heed's day the one way to get to know paintings was to go stand before them wherever they were.

So, fresh from the village of Lumberville, Johnson Heed, not yet twenty, set sail, bound for Italy. Perhaps the first leg of the voyage was via barge down the canal. Before the trip ended, Heed visited France, also England. In the latter country he learned a further tradition: the older form of his family name. He decided to adopt it. Although the spelling was changed, the pronunciation was not, for Heade had been pronounced Heed all along, and still is.

The Italian journey concluded, Martin Heade did not return to Bucks County but went to New York instead. While for the next twenty years he made his headquarters there, he also frequently visited in New England. About 1860, probably in Newburyport, Heade met a man who shared his taste for travel. James Cooley Fletcher, four years his junior, was a cleric, missionary, former secretary of the United States Legation at Rio de Janeiro, and a friend of the Emperor, Dom Pedro II. When, in 1862-63, Fletcher returned to Brazil, Heade went with him. Martin Heade had loved nature and wildlife since boyhood; he was very much drawn to hummingbirds. He now decided to paint the hummingbirds of South America, then have the paintings reproduced by chromolithography. Audubon's famous elephant folio, *The Birds of America,* had appeared twenty-five years earlier. It is likely that Heade had comparable work in mind.

Heade spent two years in Brazil. In that time he painted not only the hummingbirds but also exotic flowers and tropical landscapes. He met the emperor and dedicated the hummingbird project to him. Lumberville relatives say that he also served as a kind of court painter, that is, that he painted some royal portraits. Be that as may be, Dom Pedro, delighted, responded by dubbing Martin Johnson Heade a Knight of the Order of the Rose.

From Brazil, Heade traveled to London in 1865, seeking a publisher for his birds but, for whatever reason, failing to find one. Disappointed, he sold the paintings

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to an English businessman, then returned to America. In the score of years that followed the tour in Brazil, Heade visited Nicaragua, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Panama, Ecuador, Peru and Colombia. He roamed the United States from New Jersey to California, and while he wandered he painted.

Came the year 1883. M. J. Heade, as he usually signed his canvases, was now sixty-four. Apparently the time had come to live in a more settled way. Perhaps the compulsion to travel was satisfied. If the motivations are lost, one fact remains. Heade married. The lady, Elizabeth Small, twenty years younger than he, was said to be handsome and charming. In 1885 they moved to St. Augustine where they acquired a rambling, comfortable-looking General Grant period house. In that house and a nearby studio, Martin Heade spent his latter days. He died in St. Augustine, 4 September 1904, age eighty-five, survived by his wife.

Martin Johnson Heade left the local scene but the scene remains, and it seems to me a good place to seek him now; along the canal, beside the river and, of course, in the paintings. There are the portraits painted more or less in the manner of Thomas Hicks, the landscapes, the hummingbirds darting, and tropical flowers. In one of the flower paintings a large white magnolia blossom, round and ripe, reclines on a red velvet drape, an obvious odalisque, a Victorian nude. "What absurdities and inconsistencies we find in human nature," Heade wrote in a letter. "Every man who possesses a soul has loved once, if not a dozen times, for passion was created with man, and is a part of his nature. . . . As soon as the affectionate and sensitive part of my nature leaves me, I shall consider the poetry of my existence gone . . . for that poetry is the only source of real happiness we have, and I care not whether it is laughed at or acknowledged."

The poetry of his own long, productive existence—did it not begin on the Lumberville shore? And does not his native mother river infuse all his paintings of coastlines and marshy meadows? Perhaps the outline absorbed in his youth, the line where the land meets the water, became an in-line of visual sensibility, a form and content to be painted over and over. Heade's long narrow canvases, length often twice the width, create an illusion of distance. The horizontals seem to extend beyond their immediate bounds. Whether the view is called "Cloudy Day in Rhode Island," "The Bay of Panama at Dawn," "Sunset at Black Rock, Connecticut," or "Sunset: Lake Champlain," his descriptions of the visible world recall a feeling he carried everywhere with him of something he touched when a child.

February Walk. Walking in February is easy as easy. No thistles along the towpath, no heather or sedge. In burnt-out siennas and umbers, dead leaves define the margins. God has not yet said, Let there be green. Remnants of snow show signs of wear and exposure. While canal ice and water lie chalky and still, river waters run roily. Random segments of ice go hurrying down to the sea. A muskrat, probably feeling a stir of approaching spring, climbs out of the icy canal. It lumbers across the towpath, barges down the steep bank to the river. Glistening brown, it noses into the stream where, suddenly graceful, it loses itself in an ocherous flow of fast water.

The aquatic rodent known as the muskrat was called by Cree Indians "the animal that sits on the ice in a round form"; in three words, watsuss, wachusk, musquash. Crees, be it remembered, are an Algonkian tribe. Those in the Northeast were known as Wood Crees. Swampy Crees were closely related. Among the first to sustain the cultural shock of contact with fur traders, Crees to this day engage in the peltry traffic. So do the muskrats. They produce more pelts than all other American mammals combined, are the mainstay of the middle-price market in furs.

Short head, neck and leg, cylindrical body, ten-inch tail vertically flattened—ideal for sculling—reddish-brown topsides, cinereous below, a musquash, wet as a shirt in a washer, is a joyful sight, especially in February.

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Five miles downstream lies the borough called New Hope. While the river flows, and the Dream comes to pass, what is happening there? New Hope, as I see it, pursues (or is being pursued by) its own brand of manifest destiny.

A doctrine of free and expanding development ordained as it were by fate—which is simply to say by the talents and energies of the inhabitants—how unscientific manifest destiny sounds. How well it suggests what is happening to New Hope. Not that New Hope has territorial ambitions. On the contrary, it lives within long-standing bounds. New Hope is feeling no pressure of increase in resident population; in fact, the last census revealed a decline. The destiny manifested is largely a cultural one.

Before coming onto its present tack, New Hope was many years working to windward. A ferry tract deeded by William Penn, the place is said to have been first called Wells Ferry, after John Wells, its ferryman. Mr. Wells also doubled as tavern keeper. By offering liquor, lodging and food as well as a lift to the ripple of tourists and travelers, he established what since has become the town's foremost tradition.

Benjamin Canby succeeded John Wells. For a short time the name was Canby's Ferry. Then followed John Coryell. Through the years before and after the Revolution, John Coryell steered the ferry and skippered the tavern. Oldest timers, until not long ago, still referred to New Hope as Coryell's Ferry.

As the country grew, the ferrymen on the Delaware flexed their muscles. For good reasons Coryell's Ferry became the first industrial town in the county. Philadelphia to New York traffic passed through it, and not only that; the original tract included excellent mill sites on Great Spring Stream. Presently all manner of mills arose. Grist, grinding and flaxseed oil mills, sawmills, fulling mills for shrinking cloth, and slitting mills. In the last, metal plates were cut into strips for making nails. The grist mill erected where Great Spring Stream enters the river has suffered a sea change. It is now the Bucks County Playhouse.

In those early industrial days, however, the leading role was acted out by a Welsh Friend and millowner, Benjamin Parry. Hope Mills, he called his complex of enterprises, and that promising name soon displaced the more pedestrian Coryell's Ferry. When the Hope Mills burned down, Mr. Parry, undaunted, rebuilt. He called his new setup New Hope Mills, and the world was pleased to extend the name to the town. But then as the years flowed over the dams, and the mills, one by one, disappeared, the appellation was shortened. Today, Benjamin Parry's elegant, pointed stone dwelling stands, one of the trustworthy artifacts. His barn, remodeled, dressed to the nines, now shelters the New Hope Historical Society. But of course words like New Hope recoil from history. Such words never look back. Fairer days lie ahead, they seem to be saying and this, perhaps, is why everyone likes and wants to partake of the name.

Industry came to New Hope, departed, and left its picturesque ruins. Commerce and transporation arrived and some of it, unavoidably, went. The Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania Canal passed through *en route* from Easton to Bristol. Although thirty years have elapsed since the last barge, loaded with coal, slipped by, the canal and its lovely towpath endure. Transformed into a state-owned, slim, and very beautiful park, the waterway was apparently predetermined to serve as a refuge for muskrats and walkers.

Commerce and Transportation yielded to further manifestation, this time to Art. Shortly after the turn of the century, several painters from Philadelphia showed up. They came to paint the countryside as they saw it, capture the light, trap the color and foliage, the river and rural scenes, spring and autumn. They came to paint, as one of their number, the late Daniel Garber told me, "through pure love of nature." Other artists followed, seeking not only new landscapes but also low living costs. These were things New Hope was rich in.

Since then—and it's quite a while now—New Hope has been going the way art

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colonies go. It has, in truth, reached a later stage of a not unfamiliar, and even classical cycle. More than is commonly recognized, all sorts and conditions of people follow the artist. Art suppliers and craftsmen appear. Alongside the standard hardware and grocery store, bank and garage, an art materials shop emerges. Then a picture framer moves in, and perhaps a hand weaver. The amateurs come, the artist types, and people who want to live the art life. After them the first wave, the good tourists, arrive. Eager to breathe the artist air, hungry for culture, they come with money to spend.

Old houses, some of them simple and poor, restored by artists' appreciative hands, are bought by later arrivals, converted into self-conscious and tasteful shops, sometimes into excellent restaurants. Good tourists no longer put up with indifferent service at run-down country hotels. Local pride swells. Great becomes local desire for gain. New and effective lures are devised: night life, supper and dancing. Places of business increase, and also real estate values. Few have the time now, or inclination, to note that young artists are not moving in; the town is no longer a cheap place to live. Native sons sell out. Old colonists drift away. Good tourists, ever alert, note the change. There are, after all, so many places to take one's money and hunger for culture.

A different breed of tourist appears. By automobile, of course, but also by chartered bus, the flood tide sweeps in. From I don't know where, bringing their children, they come to see what an artist colony looks like, maybe to point at an artist. Ha! In tight pants and turbans, in Bing Crosby shirts, they promenade the narrow-necked streets, shopping the windows and buying the postcards, the ice-cream cones and the popsicles. New Hope has progressed to that point in the cycle where three full-time cops are required to handle what until but a few years ago one constable managed alone.

From the painter's eye to the tourist's shutter and lens—that's the range of the Dream and that, if you will, is what is happening to New Hope.

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A Look Around . . . . . .

". . . they come up so hastily . . . ." *

PAUL A. ZAHL

Beside long low sheds in many a pleasant country town in eastern Pennsylvania, heaps of stable litter, hay, alfalfa and crushed corn cob are mixed into compost and packed into heavy four-by-six-feet wooden frames. In pasteurizing chambers the compost is rid of any live insects, seeds and bacteria, then inoculated with laboratory-cultured mushroom filaments and covered with a layer of topsoil. Finally the frames are stacked in the sheds where under conditions of total darkness, constant temperature and high humidity, scores of tiny pulpy white spheres soon come pushing up through the soil and swell rapidly to the size of golf balls. At precisely this stage, they are gathered by pickers wearing miners' helmets, then sorted and boxed for the market. The mushroom grown in this way throughout the United States and Europe is *Agaricus bisporus,* one of the few edible fungi produced on a broad commercial scale. Some of our choicest varieties, such as the chanterelle, shaggymane, oyster and morel have resisted all attempts at culture, and may be obtained only in the wild state or in some dried or preserved form.

Whether or not they possess toxic substances obviously determines which fungi may be eaten, which must be shunned. Inedible mushrooms can be handsome things.

One June day I walked in the woods near a New Jersey farm. It had been raining and the trail was muddy. As I rounded a bend and entered a thicket of pines and birches, I came upon a bright patch of showy mushrooms. A few, fully matured, had orange and scarlet parasols broad as pie plates and flecked on top with bits of scale. Dozens of smaller ones, also highly colored, were still developing, and bulges on the thickly needled forest floor indicated newcomers just about to break through. I uncovered several, mainly to admire their waxy yellow domes. I had seen their likeness in a mushroom guidebook, above the caption: Poisonous Fly Agaric, *Amanita muscaria.* Somewhat isolated from these garish individuals were several with long slender stems and lovely pure white caps. This variety I also recognized and was glad I did. Some early expert, aware of both its deadly character and extraordinary beauty, had named this species the Destroying Angel (*Amanita verna*).

Vernas look appetizing, are said to taste good, and do not challenge the digestion for four to ten hours after they have been eaten. Symptoms develop only when the poison has permeated the system, by which time the victim is usually beyond help—racked by violent intestinal seizures, the concomitant of internal corrosion. One assumes it was a member of the *Amanita* group with which conspirators caused the death of Emperor Claudius I.

Toxic or edible, plain or fancy, hidden or conspicuous, all thirty-five thousand or more known species of fungi absolutely lack chlorophyll, function without flowers or true roots, and disseminate by means of spores, not seeds. Because it is impossible for a plant without chlorophyll to exploit the energy of sunlight, fungi are destined to

* From Francis Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum* (1627): "The Mushromes have two strange properties: the one that they yield so delicious a Meat; the other, that they come up so hastily, as in a night, and yet they are unsown."

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be either scavengers or parasites. That shelf-like growth on a stump or a fallen tree is anchored by thousands of unseen filaments penetrating the host and digesting stolen cellulose. That greenish fuzz on a piece of stale bread is spore-forming material, but underneath, mainly hidden from sight, lies a tangle of threads cunningly at work with their potent ferments. Certain fungi infect and kill animals, including man; ingested, others induce hallucinations; some disintegrate timber, leather, silks and woolens, even the coating on optical lenses—anything organic. The effects of fungi on living plants have been disastrous. Ireland's potato failure, for example, in 1845—resulting in almost a million dead of famine and a mass emigration of survivors—was caused by an uninhibited mildew.

If a destructive nature may ever be said to have a creative side, it is true of the fungi, which contrive to give us some good things, such as bread and cheese, beer and wine, sauerkraut and ensilage, industrial chemicals and antibiotics. In other ways they are even more needful: if it were not for their decaying action on stumps and logs and fallen leaves, heaps of debris would gradually choke our forests; deprived of the soil enrichment provided by the fungi and their bacterial correlatives, higher plants would quickly languish, and within a few decades the earth's capacity to yield would be seriously impaired.

Like the bacteria, fungi are everywhere, which tells us they must possess remarkable powers of dissemination. Step on a puffball or merely brush it with your shoe; the little cloud of brown dust that squirts from beneath the ruptured covering comprises several billion spores, each capable of giving rise to a whole new generation. Nearly weightless, they are swept invisibly into the atmosphere to be carried by the wind, often at great heights and sometimes for hundreds and even thousands of miles, before drifting to earth or being driven down by rain. Spores experimentally released on the first floor of a four-story building were found ten minutes later on every floor of the structure, speckling every room, hallway and closet. But not all fungal spores are airborne. Some are scattered by rain splash, others are hurled from the fruiting body like pellets from a popgun. Flies eat spores of the stinkhorn group; a single "fly speck" has been found to contain more than twenty million viable spores. Many possess an impervious hide that renders them resistant to drying, freezing and just about any other adversity short of fire and boiling water. Fungus spores are spherical, ovoid, star-shaped, elliptical, cubic or rhomboid; they may be orange, black or brown, purple, ocher, rose-colored or white. The shape and color of spores are dependable clues by which otherwise similar species may be differentiated.

Consider a single spore of the common meadow mushroom. Settling out of the air or riding to earth on a raindrop, it soaks up water in some moist cranny, soon sending out a single delicate thread which almost simultaneously begins to branch. Although both sexual and asexual reproduction are common among the fungi, mycologists do not use the terms *male* and *female* to denote sex, preferring such less Freudian designations as *plus strain* and *minus strain*. Some species have as many as four different sex strains, and the mating process is often bewilderingly complex. In the simplest case, one filament meets another; the walls of both rupture, permitting a mixture of their respective contents and the subsequent reestablishment of the species' full chromosome complement—a course basic to all sexual reproduction. Now growth begins in earnest, hungry filaments stabbing in all directions in search of sustenance. If moisture and temperature are steady and nutrient continuously available, large numbers of microscopic knobs soon appear within the tangle of filaments, relatively few of which will become mushrooms, for as some enlarge, others fail to keep pace, mainly because of food and space limitations.

As Francis Bacon noted nearly three and a half centuries ago, some mushrooms pop up overnight. But this is no mystery; the truth is that these are largely preformed, waiting just under the ground or bark for the vital stimulus of rain. When it comes, they drink deeply, within a few hours swell-

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ing like sponges to ten, twenty, a hundred times their original size, in the process breaking earth surface to meet daylight. Sometimes they appear in rings superstitiously correlated with the nocturnal games of fairies and elves, or the convocation of witches, or the visitation of a winged dragon whose fiery tail touches the earth in telltale circles.

Of course today we know that so-called fairy rings result from a wheel-like growth underground, which in season suddenly thrusts up mushroom fruiting bodies from its periphery. Grass outside the ring may be stimulated, while inside, particularly in the case of certain European species, it may wither, suggesting the recent trampling of little feet. Certain fairy-ring fungi are perennial; some near the famed Stonehenge ruins on England's Salisbury Plain are claimed to be centuries old. In such cases the hub and center of the fungal network dies, leaving an underground hoop of live filaments. Like a pebble tossed into a pond, the original spore has set up a growth wave whose circumference increases with each season. Precisely circular fairy rings are not common, for during expansion the underground filament mass will likely encounter roots, stones or strata of inhospitable soil types; these alter the wheel's symmetry with the result that mushrooms appearing annually may form imperfect or abortive figures.

A taste for mushrooms is not limited to those who can cook. Tooth marks or scrapings noted frequently on wild mushrooms indicate that others relish them—squirrels, chipmunks, insect grubs, land turtles, deer and even cattle. I have seen a slug nibbling on the dome of a tender puffball, a snail gorging on the stem or cap of an ordinary toadstool, offering some evidence perhaps that animals are capable of distinguishing toxic from nonpoisonous types, or that they possess unique immunities.

On the other side of the coin are molds that prey on animals. These share a soil habitat with a variety of lowly nematode worms. When in the course of foraging, a worm pokes its head or tail into one of numerous microscopic nooses that dangle from each fungus filament, the noose contracts instantly and the worm is caught in a strangle hold. There is no escape and when the victim dies, the captor feeds on the carcass.

The bewildering diversity expressed by the forces of biological growth persuaded early observers, accepting the Biblical premise of an orderly creation, to become identifiers, labellers, classifiers. Narrowing in on the fungi, they painstakingly established three discrete groups and gave them long Greek names: the Basidiomycetes, about fourteen thousand species, including the common mushrooms, toadstools and bracket fungi; the Phycomycetes, approximately one thousand species embracing the white rusts, bread molds, downy mildews and water molds; the Ascomycetes, nearly twenty thousand species among which are found our most notorious crop ravagers (the powdery mildews), table delicacies such as truffles and morels, oddities such as lichens, earth stars and cup fungi, and some obvious benefactors such as certain yeasts, cheese molds, and antibiotic-producing fungi. The genus *Penicillium,* for example, gives us not only Roquefort and Camembert, but also the best known of the wonder drugs. Like the organisms that produce aureomycin, streptomycin, terramycin, *et cetera,* the penicillin mold is often found in soil—that soft, damp, sweet-smelling mixture of humus and mineral apparently so passive there in the flower bed. Actually, soil is an arena for furious and continuous struggle on a micro scale. Many a telluric mold or bacterium, employing the broad principle of chemical warfare, survives only by saturating its immediate *lebensraum* with substances inimical to encroachers. Some of these chemicals, which the scientist has learned how to extract from laboratory cultures, or to synthesize, are used as powerful weapons against microbial infection.

Belonging properly to none of the three primary fungus groupings are the maverick slime molds. Taxonomists named them Myxomycetes and reluctantly gave them exclusive group status. The slime mold spore is a changeling of sorts. Falling on a suit-

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ably wet surface, it immediately germinates to produce an energetic little cell with a lashing double tail which wriggles along in the moist forest duff, eventually to settle in some damp crevice, lose its tail, and multiply, producing thousands of amoeba-like cells. Cooperatively these secrete and in turn are unified by an envelope of slime which begins oozing slowly between decaying leaves, over rotting logs, absorbing and metabolizing anything of nutrient value along the way. Finally after a few hours or at most a day or two, the slimy blob works its way out of the shadows to the upper surface of a log or a stump where the air is circulating. Here the mass stops moving and dries out, at the same time sending up stalks packed with a new crop of adventurous spores.

The close cohabitation of two different forms for their mutual benefit is called symbiosis, a relationship by no means unknown in the world of fungi. Impelled by reasons still obscure, filaments of a specific fungus will seek out and entwine the rootlets of a particular kind of higher plant. In 1904 a French botanist discovered that when he buried orchid seeds in a culture of fungus filaments regularly associated with roots of the mature orchid plant, the seeds germinated immediately and achieved maturity; never before had orchid seeds responded under artificial conditions. The mushroom fancier observes that certain fungi tend to appear only under specific kinds of trees; the pine, the birch, the larch, and many another—each shades its favored fungus. According to recent evidence, secretions from the tree's roots initially stimulate the fungus which in turn produces hormones craved by the tree.

Some years ago I hiked over the lava fields of Mauna Loa on the island of Hawaii where, a decade before, a river of white-hot lava had destroyed all life. Yet at the time of my visit, the once barren rocks were covered by a living blanket of shaggy gray vegetation. Having burgeoned from spores brought in by wind or rain, the lichen was now slowly dissolving the lava's surface layer to create soil upon which pioneering seeds of higher plants would eventually take hold and root. Each individual lichen colony unites an alga and an Ascomycete fungus. The fungus takes advantage of the alga's ability to photosynthesize, while the alga finds stability and strength in the sturdy, moisture-conserving framework of the fungus. Lichens are among the hardiest and most resistant of all organisms; they thrive on outcroppings near both the North and South Poles, on scorching hot rocks in the desert, on harshly exposed mountain tops, and even—it has been suggested with no supporting evidence whatever—on Mars itself. Lichens provide winter fodder for arctic reindeer and caribou, a source of litmus pigments and certain dyes, and a base for some perfumes.

Recent removal of two members from the Harvard faculty because of their experimentation on undergraduates with mushroom-derived drugs has drawn attention to the hallucinatory fungi, whose relation to the religio-social evolution of primitive cultures is considered significant by some investigators. Shamans of almost every known culture have chewed, smoked, eaten or imbibed botanic materials which allegedly induce delirium, euphoria, powerful visions, prophetic insight and extrasensory awareness. In most cases, the plants or plant-products had a distinctly religious identification, promising vivid communication with divinity, and even representing the embodiment of deity itself. Certain species of the genus *Psilocybe,* the "divine mushroom" ritualistically worshipped and eaten to this day by Indians inhabiting the Mexican State of Oaxaca, fall into this class. A similarly semitoxic fungus was reverenced by the Aztecs as far back at least as the Spanish Conquest. It was called *teonanacatl,* a name variously interpreted as "dangerous mushroom," "bread of the gods," or "God's flesh." The first European record of its use was set down by Bernardino de Sahagun, a priest who arrived in Mexico in 1529. He wrote:

> The first thing which they ate at the gathering was small, black mushrooms. . . . Some saw themselves dying in a vision and wept; others saw themselves being eaten by a wild beast; others imagined that they were capturing prison-

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ers in battle, that they were rich, that they possessed many slaves, that they had committed adultery and were to have their heads crushed for the offence, that they were guilty of a theft for which they were to be killed. . . . When the intoxication from the little mushrooms had passed, they talked over among themselves the visions which they had seen.

Compare this with the effect of ingested *Amanita muscaria,* as related by Koryak tribesmen in Kamchatka, Siberia:

The deity said to him, "Go to a level place near the sea: there thou wilt find . . . spotted hats. . . . Eat some of them, and they will help thee." Big Raven found the fungus, ate of it, and began to feel gay. He started to dance . . . lifted the bag at once, and sent the whale home.

R. Gordon Wasson, an American authority on the folklore of fungi, recalls impressions while under the experimental influence of hallucinatory mushrooms:

All my visions possessed a pristine quality; when I saw choir stalls in a Renaissance cathedral, they were not black with age and incense, but as though they had just come fresh from the hand of the Master. The palaces, gardens, seascapes, and mountains that I saw had that aspect of newness, of fresh beauty, that occasionally comes to all of us in a flash.

That hallucinogenic agents in certain widespread and quasi-edible fungi must have been discovered by earliest man, Mr. Wasson is quite convinced. He suggests they may have originally sparked the very concept of a Superior Being; at the least, he asserts, their use exposed layers of existence other than the one into which dawn-man was born, making an impact, perhaps underrated, upon the primitive mind and imagination.

In the simplest physiological terms, the hallucinatory fungi, to a considerably greater degree than such familiar drugs as opium, marihuana, nitrous oxide, and scopolamine, may be regarded as stimulating sensory areas of the central nervous system, while at the same time suppressing the integrative faculties. It would appear to those of us who prize rationality that such biochemically arranged aberration would tend to impede man's approach to the full truth, not draw him closer to it. Or perhaps the Koryaks are not far off in their admirably detached view that the gods inhabiting the divine mushroom inspire the eater to do whatever spirits already within him dictate.

In the tropics I have watched endless columns of *Atta* worker ants, each with a piece of green leaf clamped between its jaws, marching across the jungle floor enroute to underground galleries where, with astonishing skill and intuitive purpose, they were preparing compost beds identical in principle to those in the villages of eastern Pennsylvania. Supervising the process, the stay-at-home ant queen guards a tiny bundle of fungus filaments brought from her parental colony. With this material the compost is seeded in a manner that human mushroom growers may not realize they have duplicated. The ants, however, are interested not in the subsequent fruiting bodies or "mushrooms," but in exudates that well from the proliferating fungus filaments.

Should any reader be guided by Solomonic wisdom and wish to emulate the ant, the U. S. Department of Agriculture will, on request, supply up-to-date literature on mushroom farming. Or he may prefer to follow instructions given in 1650 by N. de Bonnefons, Valet de Chambre du Roi, who is credited with having published the earliest account of the procedure:

. . . you must prepare a bed of Mules or Asses soyl, covering it over four fingers thick with short, and rich dung, and when the great heat of the bed is qualified, you must cast upon it all the parings, and offals of such Mushromes as have been dressed in your Kitchen, together with the water wherein they were washed . . . a bed thus prepared, will produce you very good, and in very short space.

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The Revolving Bookstand . . . . . .

For Pleasure and Profit

PETRARCH AND HIS WORLD. *By Morris Bishop. Drawings by Alison Mason Kingsbury. Indiana University Press. $7.50.*

Reviewed by ELLEN JOSEPH

In writing of a man so complex that he may legitimately be labelled both medieval and modern, orthodox moralizer and fountainhead of romantic lyricism, nationalist, classicist, book collector, tourist, the biographer necessarily must choose an angle of view. Mr. Bishop's emphasis is on personality and in particular those attitudes and sensibilities that made Petrarch the first modern man.

"I would say that the mark of his character is introspection, self-analysis, an absorbed contemplation of his own spirit and behavior." This is a useful interpretation, since it allows Mr. Bishop to account for the other qualities scholars have seen as dominant in Petrarch: love, insecurity, a consciousness of mortality, the pursuit of fame, a sense of failure. Mr. Bishop also sees in "this very unmedieval prizing of his living person, not his soul" the source of Petrarch's originality, his modernity. Petrarch was the first man of record since Philip of Macedon to climb a mountain because it was there, and beautiful. Emotional identification with nature, which he felt so strongly, did not become a commonplace until the romantics. He was one of the only men of his time to read critically. His veneration of the classics and sense of mission in their preservation and diffusion was a prime force in the development of humanism. He was the first to give full expression to Italian—rather than, say, Florentine—patriotism. And his poetry celebrated, for the first time since Catullus, a wholly human love.

It is in this poetry and Petrarch's other writings that Mr. Bishop finds the main proof of his character analysis. This is not to say that he ignores their art. One of the felicities of this book is the lucid economy of his instruction in Petrarch's skill and music. But, for example, in the four chapters on Petrarch's poems in Italian, the *Canzoniere,* that punctuate the biography, Mr. Bishop is interested not in the development of the poet's technique or intellect, but in the changes in his emotional state. What he likes to consider in a sonnet on Laura is its use of factual and emotional reality. Indeed, he calls the *Canzoniere* "an autobiographical novel in verse, telling the story of a man's love-life."

How autobiographical the *Canzoniere* actually is, is the subject of much critical debate (scholars even question whether Laura was a real person—Mr. Bishop believes she was). But the other two works that, with the *Canzoniere,* make up what Mr. Bishop considers Petrarch's great contribution to literature are unquestionably autobiography. One, the *Secretum,* which in Mr. Bishop's long condensation seems as perceptive and dramatic as he claims this little-known work to be, is a search for self-understanding in the form of a dialogue between Petrarch and St. Augustine, his life-long spiritual guide. Written at a time of emotional crisis and, so Petrarch said, meant only for himself, it is "the indispensable gloss to the [*Canzoniere*]; it lays bare the reality underlying the poetic fiction."

✪ ELLEN JOSEPH, a former member of the SCHOLAR staff, now does freelance editing.

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This is, of course, inner reality. The total reality of Petrarch's life, external as well as internal, finds its documentation in the third of his great works, his *Epistolae familiares,* the collection of his letters that Petrarch himself edited into a literary entity. "No other book displays so well the intimate life and thought of a medieval man. No other pictures so thoroughly the background of commonplace or startling reality, during the painful preparation of modern times. Through his letters we may know the man Petrarch, his inward and his outward selves, as we can know no other human being until we come to Montaigne."

Note in this description the equal stress that Mr. Bishop places on the intimate life and its external background. It would be unfair not to recognize that *Petrarch and His World* very successfully fulfills the promise of its title. The society of the papal court at Avignon and the warring cities of Italy, a world that Petrarch despised and yet wooed assiduously, is given in rich detail.

Mr. Bishop treats the two aspects of his subject differently, however. Because Petrarch provides so vivid a self-portrait, he wisely gives us the inner man as much as possible through his own words. And it is a mark of Mr. Bishop's skill as selector and translator that this abundance of quoted material adds a dimension to his contribution rather than subtracting from it.

For the fourteenth-century world and Petrarch's relations with it, neither of which Mr. Bishop likes very much, his method is that of first-rate classroom instruction. He defines his terms, provides historical background for the events he describes, uses modern analogies, colorful anecdotes and an ironic tone. His presentation is widely erudite, clear and lively. There are occasional lapses. At times an irony degenerates into sarcasm, an anecdote into tiresome trivia, a contemporary analogy into hackneyed comment on the present condition of the world. One could wish sometimes for the scene-painting talents of a Catherine Drinker Bowen. But these really are minor faults. *Petrarch and His World* is a scholarly work designed for the pleasure and profit of the layman, and pleasurable and profitable it is.

The Prophet of Ekistics

ARCHITECTURE IN TRANSITION. *By Constantinos A. Doxiadis. Oxford University Press. $7.50.*

Reviewed by WOLF VON ECKARDT

"To live in almost any of our cities today," says Doxiadis, "is to live in a nightmare." The flamboyant Athenian does his best, however, to turn the nightmare into a pleasant dream. Greece's first postwar minister of reconstruction at age thirty-one, he has built a city planning operation with a staff of over five hundred, and thirteen branch offices. He is planning, consulting, building and rebuilding cities, or sizeable chunks of them, in some dozen countries including this one. How dreamy Eastwick, his new neighborhood in Philadelphia, and his urban renewal project in Louisville, Kentucky, will in the end turn out to be, remains to be seen.

Doxiadis is also the prophet of "ekistics," the science-to-be of urban planning which would include economics, sociology, geography, meteorology and whatnot, and which has just recently been dramatically endorsed by some of the world's most notable intellectuals meeting on the island of Delos.

There'll soon be a book on ekistics, Doxiadis promises in his preface. But this one deals with architecture. Or does it? For in the end Doxiadis would have architects be, not "master builders" so much, as they have always aspired to be, but master ekisticians. And it is questionable whether that would really give us better buildings in more attractive and livable cities.

✪ WOLF VON ECKARDT is an architectural critic and writer. *Life for Dead Spaces,* which he co-authored with Washington architect Charles Goodman, is his most recent book. His column, "Cityscape," appears regularly in the Washington *Post.*

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Doxiadis notes that ninety-five percent of all building in this world just happens without benefit of architecture and in spite of architects. Most of it is bad. Architectural achievement is more or less confined to a few monumental buildings such as museums, theaters, hospitals and perhaps an office tower and luxury apartment or two. It has always been thus. Every architect wants to create the Taj Mahal or Parthenon of his time. And the boys in architecture school are rarely, if ever, assigned the problem of designing low-cost housing. Although Doxiadis is too tactful to say so, our own suburbia, with a few exceptions in California, is entirely built by businessmen-developers who receive their architectural inspiration from magazines and opinion surveys among the wives of their salesmen.

"How can we [architects] justify our existence to the average man if he knows that we don't serve him either directly, as his house is not built by an architect, or even indirectly, as we don't contribute to the creation of a better habitat?" Doxiadis asks. He would have architects assume comprehensive responsibility for all the complex facets of urban planning, for building technology, for finding the answer to the haunting question of what kind of human settlement we really want in this day and age and for designing it with all the necessary potential for change built in.

It's a nice thought and not a new one. The American Institute of Architects, a few years back, announced that the architect ought to claim responsibility for "the total man-made environment." This claim, of course, only reiterated the idealistic manifestoes Gropius and other leaders of the modern movement used to issue when modern architecture was still in its adolescence. Gropius and the other leaders have undoubtedly given us better architecture. But the manifestoes and the A.I.A. haven't. They have only sanctioned the fact that architecture and city planning, along with everything else, tends to become big business. Doxiadis, in an obvious effort to calm his smaller competitors, warns against this trend.

If such giant architectural and planning firms as Skidmore, Owings and Merrill or Doxiadis' own outfit, who render their clients comprehensive service from the first economic study down to the last bathroom towel, produce livable communities, it is not because their teams of specialists are incorporated under the laws of Delaware. It is because some individual designer has fired them with the spark of creative ideas; because, as Gropius has put it, there has been "search rather than research," and because somewhere in the organization there is an artist and he has been listened to.

The trouble with our environment is not, as Doxiadis implies, that the architect is insufficiently acquainted with government, engineering, manufacturing, marketing, sociology, psychology and the results of electronically computed Gallup polls. It is that his art may be wanting. He rarely comes up with a creative concept so compelling that everyone wants to follow his lead and acknowledges him to be indeed the "master builder" Doxiadis and the A.I.A. want him to be. What's more, it takes a Renaissance to produce Renaissance men.

Doxiadis' own creative city planning concept is debatable. His answer to the explosion of our cities into the countryside and their invasion by the motor car is what he calls "dynapolis." It is a city that expands in only one direction along a superhighway. Along this main artery, Doxiadis would build a succession of business centers each served by its own residential periphery. These peripheries, in turn, are divided into "human sectors" by more highways that cross the main one. The "sector" is "human" because here you can walk to school, church, shopping and other neighborhood facilities.

Doxiadis is now building such open-ended cities at Khartoum, Sudan, and Islamabad, Pakistan. He also prescribes "dynapolis" for Washington, D. C. It should expand southward along the Potomac, he says, with everyone commuting by boat. Few planners are sold on the idea. "More 'miracle miles,'" says Victor Gruen. "The job is to tighten urban sprawl, not eat up

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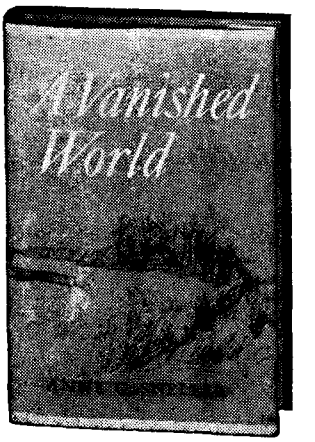
SPRING BOOKS FROM SYRACUSE

A Vanished World

Anne G. Sneller

Drawings by Nancy B. Perkins



In magical prose that captures every sight, sound, and smell, Anne Sneller recreates from her own childhood the "vanished world" every family in America holds in its memory, or wishes it did — the funny, sad, heart-warming, not-so-simple life in the country in great-grandfather's day. A book to savor, to cherish, to share.

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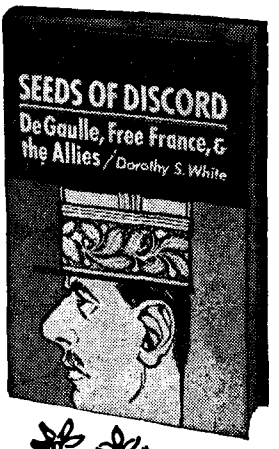

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Introduction by ERNST MAYR

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more and more land by elongating the city core and having the older end die off."

Doxiadis' only contribution to the art of building *per se,* as distinct from city planning, is to advocate standard modules in design, to admonish architects to keep buildings flexible and to respect local climates, topography and traditions. In our constant striving for discovery and originality, he says, architects should not disdain the threads that connect architecture with the past. "We should not worry so much about new solutions as about right solutions. If the right solutions lead us back to tradition we should not be afraid."

This, too, has been said before and, as with everything else in this book, the Greek only has a new word or two for it. But that doesn't mean it isn't worth reiterating. Whether we always agree with Doxiadis or not, his book is stimulating. It reveals him, however, not as a creative innovator but as what we have for some time known he is —a dynamic and capable organizer. There are not enough of them who, in his words, raise their voice "for a better human habitat."

"A Young Man's Progress"

JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES: THE PROVING YEARS 1870-1882. *By Mark DeWolfe Howe. Harvard University Press. $5.*

Reviewed by JAMES ROWE

On the library desk of Mr. Justice Holmes —perhaps the greatest of American judges— rested an ancient champagne cork. In the last years of his life he wrote to a friend:

I have by my side a champagne cork drawn . . . when my work *The Common Law* came out and marked "First copy of book March 3, 1881." (I remember that I hurried to get it out before March 8, because then I should be 40 and it was said that if a man was to do anything he must do it before 40.)

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes: The Proving Years is the second volume of the biography by Professor Mark Howe of the Harvard Law School. It covers the twelve-year span from twenty-nine to forty-one. The first volume, *The Shaping Years,* which appeared in 1957, was in many ways a dazzling book, reflecting the kind of life Holmes had led until he was twenty-nine. He had been a Civil War combat officer, wounded in battle three times, once almost fatally. He was later a gay blade around Boston and Cambridge while a postwar law school student and youthful lawyer, and had traveled extensively and happily in Europe, particularly in England where he made many lifelong friends.

By contrast the period of *The Proving Years* was a quiet, uneventful stretch in Holmes's life. Indeed Mark Howe, a sometime law clerk of the Justice, describes the route he follows as "a little dusty"! But it was Holmes's chosen route and "is the account of a young man's progress towards intellectual accomplishment."

Essentially this is the biography of *The Common Law* more than of its author. *The Common Law* is clearly the most important book on Anglo-American law written in the nineteenth century and, it may be, in the twentieth as well. The first page of Mr. Justice Holmes's book contains the famous opening still quoted in whatever languages law is taught:

The life of the law has not been logic: it has been experience. The felt necessities of the time, the prevalent moral and political theories, intuitions of public policy, avowed or unconscious, even the prejudices which judges share with their fellowmen, have had a good deal more to do than the syllogism in determining the rules by which men should be governed.

To be sure Wendell Holmes did other things besides legal scholarship during these twelve years. He earned his living; he had an extremely active law practice in Boston; he married Fanny Dixwell; he lectured at Harvard College; briefly, after the appearance of *The Common Law,* he lectured at the Harvard Law School until leaving it abruptly in 1882 to become a judge.

✪ JAMES ROWE, a Washington attorney, was law clerk to Mr. Justice Holmes, Administrative Assistant to President Roosevelt and Deputy Attorney General of the United States.

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One might argue that he was doing what his contemporaries were doing, living an active and busy life, except that he devoted all those hours to legal scholarship that the others gave to leisure and the amenities. Somehow this is not quite the perspective that Mark Howe suggests. Holmes's intensive concentration upon the intellectual life even while editing the twelfth edition of *Kent's Commentaries* in the early seventies, even indeed in the first years of his marriage, leads one to conclude that this lonely, withdrawn, intellectual discipline was, for him, the only thing that mattered.

Contemporary legal scholars still quarrel about the ultimate importance of *The Common Law*. Many of Holmes's meaningful generalizations have been superseded by later research. There is little question, however, that he was the pioneer in modern legal scholarship.

He was the first to relate law to the life of a particular society, and not treat it merely as a logical abstraction. He was the first to point out that in tort, in contract and in criminal law the legal test was objective, was what society saw in the individual's behavior, and that it was not subjective.

Holmes rejected the German philosophers, Kant and Hegel, both their metaphysical abstractions and their view that law and moral culpability were the same. Brought up in the age of Darwin, he felt the groups within the society had much more to do with the law of a particular society than did the logical philosophers. Law was force, not justice; the "sovereign" who determined the law had, nonetheless, to be a wise force and concerned not only with the day's immediacies but with the long run. He looked for and found the roots of Anglo-American law much more in the old Teutonic laws than in the Roman law.

After publication of *The Common Law,* Holmes became a professor of law at Harvard. But three months and the offer of his first judgeship were enough to convince him that the real world outside was more his bent. In 1882 he accepted appointment to the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts and closed the door of original scholarship behind him.

A Masterwork

MANKIND EVOLVING. The Evolution of the Human Species. *By Theodosius Dobzhansky. Yale University Press. $7.50.*

Reviewed by BENTLEY GLASS

Professor Dobzhansky has written a number of books on evolution, beginning with *Genetics and the Origin of Species,* which in 1937 marked the beginning of a new era in the scientific study of evolutionary processes. More than any other single work, even those by R. A. Fisher and J. B. S. Haldane which preceded it, this book catalyzed the study of population genetics as a branch of evolutionary study so that the mutation theory and the theory of natural selection were united firmly. Since that date we can truthfully speak of evolution as an *experimental* field of biological investigation. As the years passed, although Dobzhansky continued to work mainly in the laboratory and field with the tiny fruit fly, *Drosophila melanogaster,* and its congeneric species in North and South America, as the most suitable material for testing hypotheses of the origin of species and the modes of evolutionary differentiation, he became increasingly preoccupied with the relations of genetic theory to human evolution and human characteristics. This interest was manifested in many addresses given to conferences of geneticists and other biologists. It took clearer shape in *Evolution, Genetics, and Man* in 1955 and in *The Biological Basis of Human Freedom* in 1956, and it now culminates in *Mankind Evolving,* developed from the Silliman Foundation Lectures given at Yale University in 1959.

In a real sense this volume is the fruition of the years. Its title may be, as some have complained, misleading, for here is no story

✪ BENTLEY GLASS, professor of biology at Johns Hopkins University, is author of *Genes and the Man* and *Science and Liberal Education* and editor of *Forerunners of Darwin.*

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of the stages of human evolution from a lower primate ancestry, such as one would find, for example, in William Howells' *Mankind in the Making. Mankind Evolving* is a geneticist's book, not a paleontologist's or physical anthropologist's book. It is, moreover, in spite of its scholarly stature and wealth of data, a book intended for the general reader rather than the specialized student—although the latter may profit greatly from its study. It provides, in essence, a broad look at the factors that modify and the mechanisms that govern human evolution rather than a history of stages. Its emphasis is on the dynamics of evolving, not on the *status primitivus* or *status sapiens;* its emphasis is on the becoming, not on the origin, or the end point, or even the steps between.

Dobzhansky is a master of expository style. The succession of chapters is clearly organized, clearly developed, clearly written. The titles of the chapters are sufficient to set forth the logic of the exposition. They are as follows: Biology and Culture in Human Evolution; Heredity; Environmentalist Thesis and Hereditarian Antithesis; Equal but Dissimilar; Heredity of Health and Disease; Natural Selection and Survival of the Fit; The Emergence of Man; Human Mental Faculties and their Antecedents; Polymorphism, Class, and Caste; Race; Evolution in Process; and The Road Traversed and the Road Ahead. In a very great degree the book is self-contained, in the sense that the scientific basis required for understanding each chapter is set forth clearly in the preceding chapters. Certainly, anyone who has had a coverage of genetics and evolution equivalent to what is now provided for tenth-grade high school students in the new textbooks of the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study will meet with no technical impediments to understanding. The language for the most part is plain and straightforward, with occasional touches of humor or literary allusion, but rising to eloquence only in the final chapter, wherein the author grapples with the future course of man, with ethics, sin and wisdom.

There is nothing very new in this book, either for geneticists or readers of Professor Dobzhansky's previous writings. The data have been presented and considered elsewhere; the philosophical point of view remains consistent; the perspective is broadened and deepened rather than shifted. Nevertheless, this is a real masterwork, bearing the same general relation to the earlier *Genetics and the Origin of Species* that Charles Darwin's *Descent of Man* bore to *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection.*

In what, then, does the genius of this book consist? Chiefly, I believe, in its breadth and balance. The author is at great pains to reveal, through consideration of the best available data, the futility of such proposed antitheses as heredity or environment, genetic equality or diversity, and natural selection or ethics. He thus lays the strongest possible foundations for the social and cultural consideration of the unavoidable, ineradicable differences in human inheritance, whether individual or racial. In our century, when social Darwinism and racism have urged men to extremes of misguided action, and when prejudice and bias seize upon science for justification, it is of inestimable worth to have a sane, sober treatment of the weightiest questions of human differences and capacities, of the human past and human future, by a man who understands both what science really has to tell us and what science is unable at the present time to clarify.

Although geneticists have long since ceased to argue about whether nature or nurture controls the development of a particular characteristic—since no individual can develop in a vacuum and since a normal individual can develop normally only in a normal environment, and since no environment can act except upon a genetically endowed and controlled species of development—it is still necessary to have this admission restated clearly on the basis of evidence and scientific judgment. Dobzhansky's way of putting it is as follows:

> The genes interact with the environment, and the outcome is the process of development, or aging. Development results in an orderly suc-

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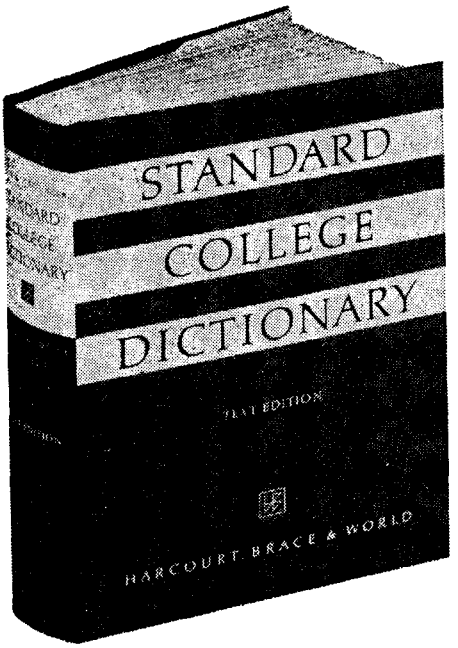

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cession of phenotypes. The genotype determines the reactions and responses of the developing, or aging, organism to the environment: it determines the norm of reaction. . . . All the traits, characters, or features of the phenotype are, of necessity, determined by the genotype and by the sequence of environments with which the genotype interacts. There is no organism without a genotype and no genotype can exist outside of a spatiotemporal continuum, an environment.

It remains meaningful to ask to what extent the expression of a given genotype can be modified by ordinary or extreme alterations of the environment, and whether different genotypes vary considerably in this respect. Dobzhansky discusses with acuity the various methods of studying the resemblances among relatives of given degrees of consanguinity, and especially among fraternal and identical twins, in order to throw light on these questions. The analysis of simple and complex traits illuminates the heredity of health and disease, malformation, behavioral disorders and longevity.

The discussion of natural selection in human history and today is of particular value. It is crucial to an understanding of the urgency and the efficacy of eugenic measures that one should realize that natural selection, or differential reproduction in sum total, may be subdivided into the effects of differential mortality among genotypes, and of differential fertility and fecundity among genotypes. In all past history mankind, like most species, has been subjected principally to selection through differential mortality, and inherited resistance to specific diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis has played an important part in the development of individual and racial differences. Today, at least in the Western world, the reduction of mortality during the preadult years of life has been so great that natural selection has shifted ground quite radically. There is now evidence—not, as some suppose, that natural selection has ceased to operate in mankind —but rather that differences in fertility and fecundity have stepped into foremost rank as agents of selection. It is important, also, to realize that this type of selection, so valuable for the species when its numbers are diminishing or barely holding their own with competitors, becomes actively dysgenic when a species is undergoing a population explosion. War and famine may indeed result when nations differ too radically in this parameter of evolution; and within nations the fertility of the asocial and antisocial elements may lead to the submergence of the more socially minded and self-restricting types of person.

The nature of mutation and its role as the raw material upon which natural selection operates, and in the absence of which natural selection would slow down and become inoperative, must also be understood by those who wish to comprehend the nature, rate and trends of human evolution. Dobzhansky discusses these problems too, and the present state of our knowledge in respect to them, which is still clouded concerning the measure and significance of "genetic load"—that is, the burden of detrimental mutations, openly expressed or hidden, which are carried in the population. Dobzhansky here aligns himself with those who do not regard the majority of important genetic differences within and between human populations—our so-called polymorphisms—as being held in the population simply by an equilibrium between the rates of mutation of the respective genes, on the one hand, and the rates of their elimination through natural selection, on the other. An alternative, still to be evaluated in full by geneticists, is that many or most of these genes are retained in the population because they confer some advantage in the heterozygous carrier who possesses both a normal and a mutant allele of the gene. The now classic example is that of sickle hemoglobin, which has been shown to be nearly always fatal when homozygous (*ss*), but which is kept in high frequencies in tropical African populations because a child with normal hemoglobin only (*SS*) is much more susceptible to mortality from malaria than one with both normal and sickle hemoglobin (*Ss*) in roughly equal proportions. What we cannot properly evaluate at the present time

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is how many of the human polymorphisms owe their presence to this favored condition of the heterozygote in some or all environments. No geneticist, on the other hand, fails to recognize that the great majority of detectable mutations, whether spontaneous or induced by high-energy radiation or chemical agents, are definitely harmful in development or maturity, and that any considerable increase in the general mutation rate through increasing exposure to mutagenic agents would be harmful.

The chapters on the emergence of *Homo sapiens* and his special characteristics culminate in the important chapters on polymorphism, class, caste and race. It is not sufficient to know that "the notion that all men are born not only equal but also biologically alike, is a fallacy . . . pernicious in the long run." One must also come to perceive that for the most part human differences of a hereditary nature, within races and between different races, are the outcome of the action of natural selection on mutations. The very preservation of these different genes over many generations argues that in the particular environments where they exist, or where they arose, they are, or formerly were, of some evolutionary advantage. The very existence of microgeographic races, as in Wales, or of social castes with different genetic composition, as in India, or of the preservation of genetic similarities in different groups of Jews, in spite of their tendency to become gradually more like the peoples among whom they dwell, argues for the lasting importance of genetic differences. Moreover, it appears clear that the equalization of opportunity, that is to say, the equalization of environment, serves only to heighten the part played by genetic differences in the variance of populations. Yet none of these facts impels us to accept racism, or to view one race as superior and another as inferior. Probably all are genetically superior to all others when within the special and specific environments in which each type evolved. Moreover, in matters of intelligence and other characteristics of high social value there is manifestly far more variance within each population than there is difference in the averages of the populations. One may quite simply be a genius, or an idiot, no matter what one's race or people.

Dobzhansky's final chapters are devoted to a consideration of social values in human evolution and to a plea for greater mutual tolerance and riper wisdom. Like many another biologist who has written on this subject, he sees cultural evolution now largely replacing biological evolution. He quotes G. G. Simpson: "The old evolution was and is essentially amoral. The new evolution involves knowledge, including the knowledge of good and evil." And he adds, for his own part: "Human values and wisdom are products of cultural evolution, conditioned of course by biological evolution, yet not deducible from the latter. . . . Man and man alone knows that the world evolves and that he evolves with it. By changing what he knows about the world man changes the world that he knows; and by changing the world in which he lives man changes himself. . . . Evolution need no longer be a destiny imposed from without; it may conceivably be controlled by man, in accordance with his wisdom and his values."

I am sure that Professor Dobzhansky, with all his knowledge of the subject, would nevertheless disclaim sufficient wisdom or appreciation of values. It may remain his proudest boast that he has advanced man a step or two nearer to the day when the collective wisdom and values of mankind will suffice for the awe-inspiring endeavor to control the course and direction of human evolution. For the present, humility is truly the better part of valor.

Coming in Summer. . . .

Edward Cone on the books of Igor Stravinsky

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A SELECTED LIST

University press books in this country range from the highly specialized and regional to the general and international. The SCHOLAR *here presents a list of 1963 university press publications especially selected for the intelligent, nonspecialized reader. Observations by some past and present members of the Editorial Board of the* SCHOLAR *precede the list, and their initials—and those of other Board and staff members—following the titles indicate particular recommendations.*

It was Apellis, the Ionic painter, I think, who, responding to the ill-tempered criticism of a shoemaker to his painting, replied in the now well-tempered phrase, "Cobbler, stick to thy last." It is heartening to see that a number of the university presses continue to publish books that reflect the regional or parochial interests of their universities. Thus, I do not think it amiss that Southern Methodist University Press publish the *Folklore of the Oil Industry,* or that the University of New Mexico Press bring out *Navaho Trading Days.* But I do remain puzzled about the association, in the sequence it is presented, of *The Platform Scripture (of the Sixth Zen Patriarch)* followed by *The Annual Addresses of the Mid-Atlantic Association of the Colleges of Business Administration,* and this in turn followed by *The Logic of Science* and *The Impact of the Foundation Reports on Business Education*—all presented here as ideal reading for the general nonspecialized reader. A strange dialectic indeed!

The one other impression in reading the list of the university presses is of the continuing sobriety of the titles. There are, thankfully, few such effluvia as (apocryphally) *The Song and the Sky: Themes in Christian Humanism in the 15th Century.* Instead we get such simple and straightforward titles as *Shakespeare and Christian Doctrine,* or *Graham Greene: Some Critical Considerations.* Personally, I like book titles to be didactic rather than homiletical or allegorical. I like to be told straightforwardly what a book is about. The list did leave me with one shudder—that title *The Romantic Ventriloquists—Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Byron.* What a shrill voice.

DANIEL BELL

* * *

Looking over the list of recent publications of the university presses, one cannot but be impressed by the number of books that seem to hit an exact middle ground between the specialized monograph and the volume tailored to a mass audience. Here are books which seem to be eminently publishable (and readable), yet are expected to reach a more or less limited group of people interested in meanings and values.

In a time when so many "non-books" are issued—publications that have been concocted, not created; put together rather than written—the universities seem able still to produce books. One derives from this the happy thought that they may still be able, also, to produce men.

AUGUST HECKSCHER

* * *

I have gained two main impressions from poring over a large list of university press books. The one is that the variety of publication is so great that it would be dangerous to make any sweeping generalizations. The other is that the university presses are publishing a good number of books that would be perfectly successful under the imprint of a commercial publisher, but whose authors seem to prefer the university press imprint. I am thinking more particularly

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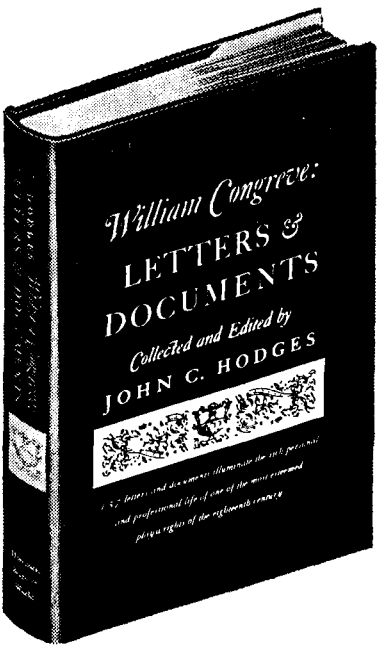

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of such recent titles as Sorensen's *Decision Making in the White House* and Isaac Deutscher's series on Trotsky. I should think that at some point this publishing of profitable volumes might raise the question of the university presses' tax-exempt status with the internal revenue bureau.

Certainly one still encounters in the university press lists labors of love that must be very costly—for example, the twenty volumes of *Scrutiny* that the Cambridge University Press has just issued. There is also the whole great field of local history and tradition, which some of the western and southern presses seem to specialize in. Personally I do not respond very warmly to this sort of thing—although it may well be a public service. I am more impressed—as a contribution to enlightening the general public—with the series of high-level books on Catholic philosophy which the Duquesne University Press has issued during the past year. This seems to me exactly the specialized function that a university press can perform most effectively.

H. STUART HUGHES

• • •

In general, the more publishers of any kind the better just because there is that much less chance of a valuable book's being lost. Hence, the more university presses the better. The more commercially successful a university press becomes, the less reason there is for thinking of it as essentially different from any other press even though it may have special interests.

A big question is always "Why was this book published by a university press rather than by a commercial publisher?" A commercial publisher certainly has usually a better chance of attaining a good distribution—except in the case of books appealing definitely to scholars or the academically-oriented (horrid term!), who are favorably impressed by university sponsorship.

The usual answers are, I imagine, these: (a) The book is of the class just described. (b) The book has been, or probably would be, declined by a commercial publisher but was accepted by the university press for any one of a number of reasons including a different estimate of its commercial possibilities, a willingness to take a loss because of belief in the real worth of the book, a desire to serve a distinguished member of the faculty or a promising young one. In this last class fall a few books of the doctoral thesis type which will probably never be read by anyone except those who will use them to write another work of the same type. Such books as these should probably be merely microfilmed or mimeographed. All the others seem to me to deserve publication.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

• • •

The overwhelming impression conveyed by this list of university press books is that the list represents a surprisingly broad scope of interests, both academic and popular. The number of popular titles issued by the university presses grows larger each year—and this is good if only for the reason that the sale of such titles may help subsidize the publication of special works, which, we are told, almost never pay for themselves. I suppose it cannot be helped that the academic titles are unmistakably academic and heavy, suggesting in themselves all the laborious apparatus of formal scholarship, but I wish it were otherwise; and the reason is simple. The titles tend to ward off all but the narrow specialist. Many of the titles sound like doctoral dissertations, and even the narrow specialist in a given field may decide against reading, much less buying for his library—even at discount—yet another dissertation. It's pretty hard to imagine a really busy biologist, or zoologist, or a scientific philosopher deciding, on the basis of the title, that he just must read *Animal Species and Evolution*. I have a rather lively layman's interest in Greco-Roman archeology, but I'm not moved to rush off an order for *Potidaea: Its History and Remains*. I may be alone in this, but I happen to think that the titles given to scholarly works are a problem to which the Association of American University Presses ought to suggest a solution.

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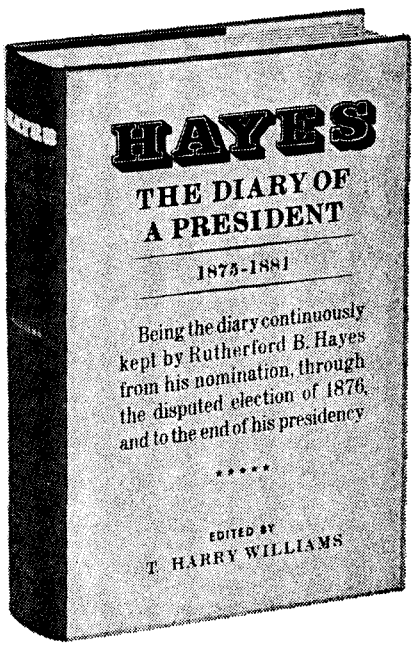

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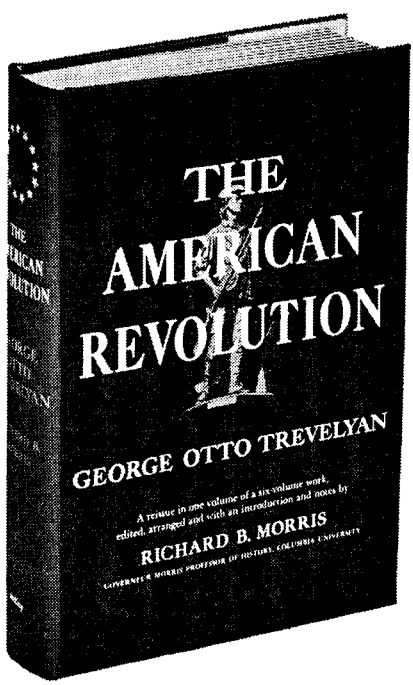

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The university presses must publish a large proportion of the books that eventually wind up in the paperback lists. This is probably a mixed blessing. Looking over the list of university press originals of 1963, one can only speculate on the effect the paperback boom has had. It must affect both the market and the selection of manuscripts. How can these expensive originals compete in the market with their own low-priced offspring? How many are published with an eye to the paperback rights? How long will it be possible to get a book accepted that has no paperback future? What long-range effect will this have on the true function of the university presses—the publication of scholarly work of high quality, regardless of its mass appeal? The list for 1963 still provides some assurance to the scholar, but it also poses the questions raised above.

C. VANN WOODWARD

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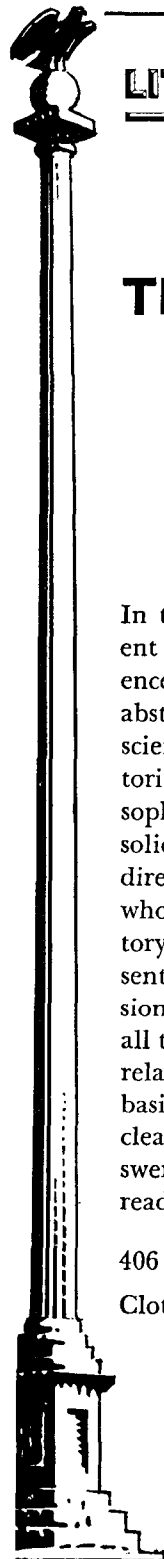

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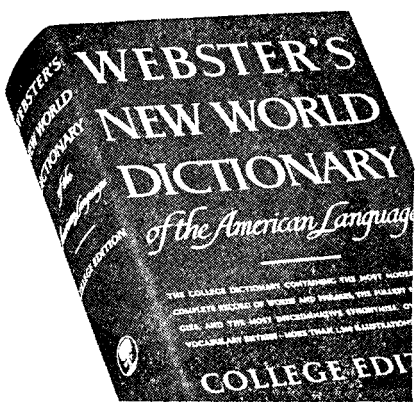

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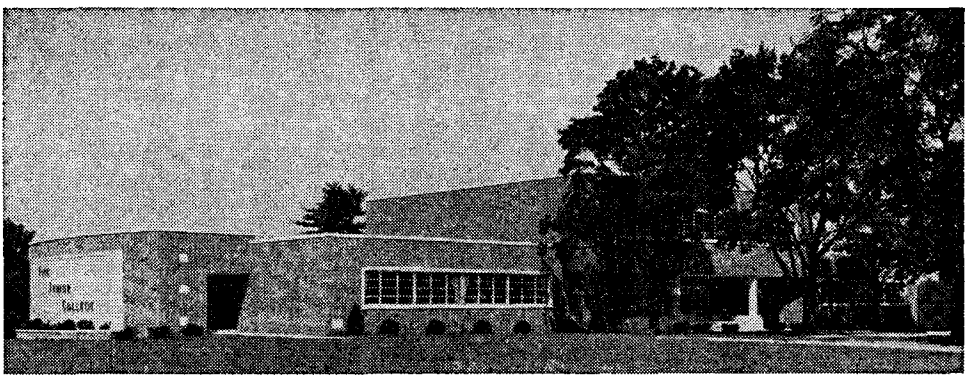

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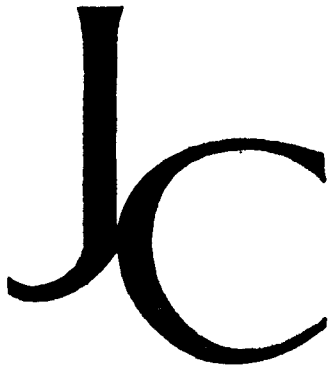

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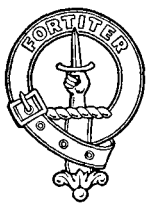

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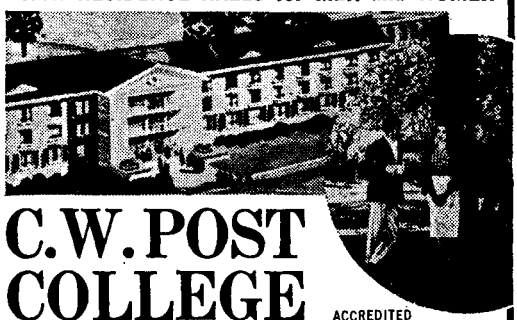

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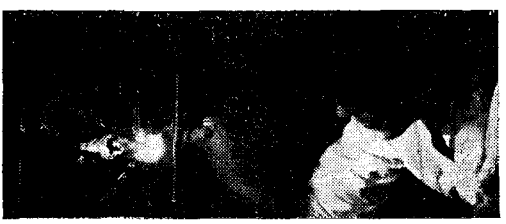

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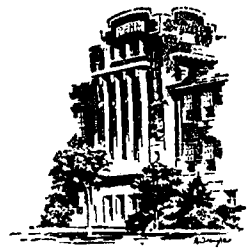

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The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles that have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington 9, D. C. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*
—EDITOR

Mr. Zinn is presumptuous in his article, "The Southern Mystique" [AS: Winter, 1963-64], in claiming to have dissolved the mystery of the South. He may have dissolved a small portion of it, but the fact that he has equated violence and irrationality with the whole of the mystique simply indicates that he has not progressed very far in his mystique-dissolving.

I am not a native of the South, as I assume Mr. Zinn is not, and perhaps therefore am in a strong position to write this letter. I have lived in the region for most of my childhood and worked in Atlanta in the years leading up to the era of desegregation.

In another era for another reason, Southern violence and irrationality affected me, too, but my roots are deep enough in red Southern earth to want to preserve the good, major portion of the mystique. To me, the South is *not* a terrible place, contrary to Mr. Zinn's impression. I have not been meticulously analytical about my reasons for liking the region, for this would destroy its mystique, but this much I know:

I have loved Atlanta for the comparative reason, warmth, balance and enlightened progress of most of its people, as I have loved no other home. I was in a position to know, too, writing there for a daily newspaper on assignments that gave me a great deal of contact with stable, cultured, educated members of the white community and, on some occasions, comparable Negro members of Mr. Zinn's Spelman College and adjoining Morehead College. Atlantans give as real human beings, and a great number of white people give to Negroes in the generous, gracious way that has characterized a wonderful portion of the Southern tradition, or mystique, for so very long.

So much has been made of the ugly fringe part. It is a rude fact of our *national* character, which encompasses our *regional* characters, that ugly people are more vociferous than the lovely ones. The ugly people seem to attract the almost complete attention of the television cameras and, whether we like it or not, constant seeing may have a strong influence on our collective believing. But the lovely Atlantans, the responsible ones, my friends, resisted strongly in their quiet and ordered way by traditional democratic methods.

They were terribly hurt by the raucous intrusion that labeled itself the will of the majority of the people of the United States. They thought they ought to be allowed to preserve their traditions. But when they realized that nothing short of organized violence—the riots and boycotts that Mr. Zinn *himself* advocates—would be effective, they chose to put responsibility for order and reason ahead of "fighting fire with fire" that effective resistance to desegregation would have meant.

I call this sense of responsibility caring of the highest order. It was traditional American democracy at work. Atlantans *cared* enough to say—and I heard them say it—"We love our way of life, but we are a part of these United States. We will have to do what they say, for, as far as we can tell, they represent the will of the majority of the people in these United States." And, they added, "When the schools desegregate, we are not going to have a recurrence of Little Rock." Atlanta didn't, either.

That Mr. Zinn's particular persuasion of temperament fails to recognize this attitude as *caring*, that he implicitly condemns it as a weakness rather than as a consummate strength of character in its respect for law and order, and a consummate belief in American democracy, seems to reflect the limited social experience and upside-down sense of values that both encourage him to try, and prevent him from, solving the Southern mystique.

ELIZABETH MORGAN
Scarsdale, New York

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MR. ZINN replies: The writer of the above letter has distorted several of the points in my article:

I did not claim "to have dissolved the mystery of the South." The mystique, I said, "is beginning to vanish." It is a process.

I am astonished by her statement that I advocate "riots and boycotts." Neither here nor elsewhere have I advocated riots. Boycotts and demonstrations, yes.

She says: "To me the South is *not* a terrible place, contrary to Mr. Zinn's impression." I wrote: "The South is still the most terrible place in America. Because it is, it is filled with heroes. The South is monstrous and marvelous at the same time."

But beyond the distortions, it is clear that the writer and I lived in different worlds in Atlanta. Occasionally, I did step out of the Negro community to meet her "lovely Atlantans, the responsible ones" who wanted to "preserve their traditions." It was, sad to say, those "stable, cultured, educated" people who, by their gracious consent, kept a brutal system alive over the years. True, they are now adjusting to desegregation—as they adjusted earlier (with less regret) to slavery and to segregation. This shows grace and agility. But is it "strength of character"?

There *are* white Southerners with strength of character, with an ineffable courage, all over the South today. The young people in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, historian James Silver, attorneys Bill Higgs and Charles Moore, writers Margaret Long and Pat Watters, the tireless Eliza Paschall and Frances Pauley, the elderly Ashton Jones (still in prison in Atlanta) and thousands of unknown white people who always refused to adjust, who listened instead to a different drummer.

Racism is not, we all know, a purely Southern way of life; it has been our national curse. How thankful we should be to all those singing demonstrators who are *giving* the nation what charity withholds from an individual: dignity.

* * *

There is much to be lamented in contemporary architecture but Joseph Wood Krutch's eloquent attack [AS: Winter, 1963-64] has, I fear, missed the mark. Most architects already agree with his objections to monolithic design and to the glass box, the latter of which led nowhere except to rather bland shelters with outrageous heating and cooling problems. We see now that the formal design logic that stressed the use of materials neglected the needs of the people within and without.

Mr. Krutch's objections to the restless churches of Tucson are misplaced, protests against mediocrity, not contemporary architecture. Eero Saarinen's Dulles Airport also stresses the tensile strength of modern materials, but under the control of a marvelously sure and talented hand, and a grander building has not been constructed since the early part of the century.

How then is contemporary architecture moving today? In ways that hopefully will come close to satisfying Mr. Krutch's desires, for in all thoughtful new designs we are seeing the return of ornamentation. For economic and psychological reasons it is not the ornament of the Gothic, Renaissance or Classic periods. It results rather from the modulation of the building form itself, from the exaggeration of certain of the structural elements, or from the manipulation of material and texture. In any case it can be built at some relatively reasonable price and, when well done, gives to the eye a changing pattern of light and shadow as well as detailed points of focus and interest. And this, after all, is the purpose of architectural ornament.

Let Mr. Krutch therefore not accept Gothic as the best that man has done and can hope to do—it would leave most of us architects without

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work. Let him rather help us to design buildings that give him pleasure and a glimpse of beauty and will give to his great-grandchildren an architectural standard to which they can refer with love and nostalgia as they evolve solutions appropriate to their own needs and resources.

GEORGE S. WINNACKER
Berkeley, California

* * *

I must make an honest, quizzical complaint about "Jewish Radicals, Jewish Writers" [AS: Autumn, 1963] by Allen Guttmann. Why does the author choose to ignore such significant and outstanding Jewish writers and radicals as Leslie Fiedler, Karl Shapiro and Nathanael West? I am frankly puzzled and distressed.

If Mr. Guttmann had chosen, for instance, to either revile or refute, dismiss or footnote Fiedler somewhere in his article, I could have accepted that with gracious incredulity, at least; and I could have forgiven him—sadly, reluctantly, of course—if he saw fit only to mention Shapiro and West. But why simply treat them as unmentionables? I am honestly curious.

Of course, speculation about Mr. Guttmann's scholarly standards and his academic purpose in all of this would be presumptive on my part. But until he makes himself clear for having committed such scholarly sins of omission, I can only presume that the author of "Jewish Radicals, Jewish Writers" pretty definitely felt these Jewish authors did not qualify for inclusion in any significant way.

Specifically, Mr. Guttmann knew that Leslie Fiedler (to choose only one of the three) has been writing for a great many years, in many books and articles, about most aspects of the spiritual and philosophical condition of American Jews in particular. He knew that Fiedler's works ranged from the pamphlet, "The Jew in the American Novel," to essays in *An End To Innocence,* to the novel, *The Second Stone.* All of them he must have known were germane to Jewish writers and radicals, but still the author of such an impressive array of contemporary opinion and thought does not deserve even a footnote!

Relegating Fiedler to such an unmentionable limbo did not imply necessarily that Guttmann did not agree with him, of course, because his article is fairly well-sprinkled with many ideas and observations which I first encountered on reading Fiedler. And so, all in all, I am, I suppose, naïvely curious about just what the score is on this scholarly front? I shall resist the impudent temptation to editorialize about the perilous parallels that might be neatly drawn between scholarly "unmentionables" and primitive "untouchables."

JAMES S. ELMORE
Lewiston, Idaho

MR. GUTTMANN replies: Mr. Elmore neglects to add that I also failed to mention Nelson Algren, Israel Amter, Charles Angoff, Herbert Aptheker, Hannah Arendt, Michael Blankfort, Maxwell Bodenheim, Louis Brandeis, Paddy Chayefsky, Arthur A. Cohen, Morris R. Cohen, Joy Davidman, Irving Feldman, Edna Ferber, Louis Finkelstein, Waldo Frank, Norman Fruchter, Daniel Fuchs, Maxwell Geismar, Allen Ginsberg, Nathan Glazer, Harry Golden, Louis Hacker, Ben Hecht, Richard Hofstadter, John Hollander, Stanley Edgar Hyman, Horace Kallen, Alfred Kreymborg, Max Lerner, Meyer Levin, Ludwig Lewisohn, Walter Lippmann, Arthur Miller, Howard Nemerov, Dorothy Parker, Henry Roth, Meyer Schapiro, Delmore Schwartz, Samuel Shapiro, Irwin Shaw and Leon Uris. The list might be extended. The point is that there is an important distinction between a thirteen-page essay and *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia.* There is also an important distinction between the word *unmentioned* and the word *unmentionable.*

Mr. Elmore seems most "puzzled and distressed" by my failure to revile, refute, dismiss or footnote Leslie Fiedler. Let me attempt, with comments on general indebtedness and on Mr. Fiedler himself, to wheedle Mr. Elmore into the "gracious incredulity" which seems to be the best I can hope for. First. Central to my essay is the rather widely employed concept of alienation. Although I felt no need to state my indebtedness to Marx's early work or to Durkheim's *Le Suicide,* I did quote at length from Thorstein Veblen, whose essay of 1919 applies the concept of alienation to the situation of the "Jewish" intellectuals in Western society. I am sure Mr. Elmore will grant that Veblen's work antedates Fiedler's. Second. In an early version of my essay I did include Mr. Fiedler's name in a list of about a dozen. I was subsequently able, fortunately, to talk to Mr. Fiedler and to ask him about his commitment to Judaism. His response was gracious and witty, but it left me too uncertain about Mr. Fiedler's views to cite him as evidence for my generalization about the correlation of religious and political dissent. At no time during this conversation did Mr. Fiedler intimate that his work was the *sine qua non* for all further speculation about Jewish radicals or Jewish writers.

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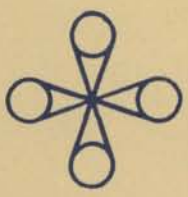

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